

P E R S I A N LETTERS.

Translated by Mr. O Z E L L.

V O L U M E *the* F I R S T.

The S E C O N D E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. T O N S O N, over-against
Katharine-Street in the *Strand*.

M D C C X X X.

PERKINS

LETTERS

Transcribed by Mr. O. A. J.

of the Perkins family

the Perkins family

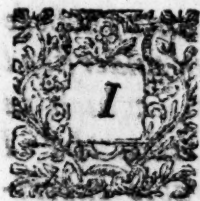
of the Perkins family

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of the Perkins family



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Here present the English Reader with the most diverting as well as instructive Book that France has produced these many Years. It is wrote with a Strength of Reasoning, a Freedom of Thought, and a Vein of just Humour, which that Nation was hardly thought capable of: and which is most surprising, notwithstanding the supposed Impossibility of such an Attempt, the Author has found a new Sett of Characters never before represented in Europe. He has opened to us a Scene of Action which all the Curiosity of our most famous Travellers cou'd never pierce into,

Advertisement.

and given us so natural an Idea of the Manners of the Seraglio, the Thoughts and Passions of a number of Women confined for the Pleasures of a single Man, and the Notions and Cast of Mind of the Eunuchs whose whole Lives are spent in guarding and watching them, that one wou'd almost believe the Letters to be Genuine.

If ever the Translation of a French Book was necessary in a Country where that Language is so much understood as in England, it is this, which in many places is so obscure, that tho' I think I have had a tolerable experience in this Togue, yet without much Thought and even sometimes consulting of Friends, I own I cou'd not have reach'd the Sense. The Author, hurried away by the fire of his Wit, and the multitude of Thoughts crowding in upon him, cou'd not so well attend to Perspicuity of Expression. But if we often forgive an Author his want of Thought when his Language is smooth, sure we may pardon the darkness of Style in a Work where the Thoughts make us so full amends!

Advertisement.

I shall not pretend to inform the Public of the Name of the Author; if I knew it I wou'd bury it in eternal Silence. He has threaten'd us with so severe a Penalty if we enquire him out, namely, that of being silent from the moment he is discovered, that the World would have no great Obligation to any body's impertinent Curiosity, that shou'd make them pay for so trifling an Information with so invaluable a Loss.

If the Author keeps his Promise of favouring us with more of these entertaining Performances, I shall continue to put them in the best dress for my Countrymen that I am able.

For the better Instruction of the Readers, I have added a few Notes.

John Ozell.

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POST-

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE

English Reader.

TH^O' in forming both Tables of Contents I have been the fuller, to the end some of the Author's Allusions might be the better understood; yet in many places of this Work, besides those already taken notice of, I'm apt to think the Reader will want a few more helps by way of Notes.

For example: The first Letter in the Second Vol. is a fine Satyr not only on the Gentlemen of the *French* Academy, but on all others who pretend to fix the Standard of

POSTSCRIPT.

a living Language, like the mad Taylor who said he cou'd make a Coat for the Moon. Thus much indeed is obvious to every Reader; as also, that *the Code of their Decisions, the child of forty Fathers*, can be nothing else but the Great French Dictionary, publiht some years since by that Academy. But every *English* Reader may not know that by *the Bastard who popt into the World before the other legitimate child*, the Author means the Dictionary of Monsieur *Furetiere*, which he stole from the *French Academy*, and publiht before theirs came out. For which rascally Action they expell'd him. And since I'm upon this Article, I shall beg the Reader's leave to go thro' with it. On occasion of *Furetiere's* expulsion as aforesaid, among other witty Conceits at that time there was struck a sort of Medal representing *un Etron*, anglicè, a S---r---verence: and round it these Words, in *Latin*, *ab ejectione corporis sanitas*, Better out than in.

Again;

POSTSCRIPT.

Again; in the same Letter concerning the *French Academy*, the Author talks of their being *gripping*. I take this to hint at Monsieur *Grannier* another member of that Academy, who had defrauded an Orphan of a large Sum of Mony; for which they expell'd him too. On this occasion a Medal (or something like it) was struck, representing a Spider hung in its own Webb, with these words round it, in *Italian*, *Lavora per impiecarsi*, Takes pains to be hang'd.

The rest must be deferr'd till another Opportunity.



Persian



Persian Letters.



Shall write no Epistle
Dedicatory, nor de-
mand Protection for
this Book. It will be
read, if it is good; if
bad, I care not whether it be read
or no.

I have begun with these Let-
ters, to try the Taste of the Publick.
I have many more in my Cabinet,
which may be publish'd in time.

But it is upon Condition that I
am not found out; for as soon as
my Name is known, I am silent
for ever. I know a Lady who
walks very well, and yet limps if
any one looks on her. The faults
of the Work may satisfy the Cri-
ticks,

ticks, without exposing those of my Person to them. Besides; were it told who I am, every one would cry, 'Tis like him: His Book is his true Character: He might have employ'd his Time better: It does not become a Man of Gravity. The Criticks never miss these Reflections, because little or no Wit is required in hitting upon them.

The *Persians* who wrote these Letters, lodg'd at my House. We liv'd together; and as they look'd upon me as one of another World, they conceal'd nothing from me. Indeed 'twas hardly possible for men at such a distance from Home to have Secrets that could affect me, and accordingly they communicated to me the greatest Part of their Letters. I took Copies of 'em, and laid my Hands on some which they wou'd willingly have kept from me, as exposing a little too much the *Persian* Vanity and Jealousie.

Thus

Thus I am a Translator only. My greatest Trouble was to make this Work as conformable as I cou'd to our Manners. I have endeavour'd to ease the Reader as much as possible with respect to the *Asiatic* Style, and have left out a-bundance of sublime Expressions, which would have carry'd him into the Clouds, and tir'd him with their Sublimity.

This however is not all I have done for him. I have curtail'd the long Compliments, of which the Orientals are more prodigal than even we our selves ; and have left out most of those minute Passages, which cannot well bear the Light, and ought always to be buried between Friends.

If most of those that have publish'd Collections of Letters had done the same thing, there would scarce have been enough left to trouble the Press with.

I can't help observing, that I have been often surpriz'd to find these
Per-

4 Persian Letters.

Persians as well inform'd as my self of the Manners and Customs of our Nation. Even the nicest Circumstances have not escap'd them ; as they have done many *Germans* who have travell'd thro' *France*. I impute it to their long Abode among us, without reckoning that it is easier for an *Asiatic* to learn the *French* Manners in one Year, than for a *French* Man to learn those of *Asia* in four ; because the former discover as much as the latter conceal themselves.

Custom permits every Translator, nay every barbarous Commentator, to adorn the Head of his Version, or his Glossary, with the Panegyrick of the Original, and to set forth its Utility, Merit and Excellence. I have done no such thing. The Reasons are easily guess'd at. One of the best is, that it would be very tedious, in a Place of it self generally very insipid ; I mean, a Preface.

LET-



LETTER I.

Usbek to his Friend Rustan,
at Ispahan.



WE stay'd but one Day at
Com : when we had paid
our Devotions at the
Tomb of the Virgin
who brought forth
twelve Prophets, we proceeded on
our Journey, and arriv'd yesterday at
Tauris, being the twenty fifth of
our Departure from *Ispahan*.

Rica and I are perhaps the two
first *Persians* that ever left their own
Country out of a desire of Know-
ledge ; and renounc'd the sweets
of Tranquility, for the laborious
search of Wisdom.

We were born in a flourishing
Kingdom ; but we did not believe
there was nothing to be learnt out
of

6 *Persian Letters.*

of its Limits ; or that there was no Light but the Oriental, by which we could be illuminated.

Tell me what they say of our Travels. Don't flatter me. I do not expect many Approbators. Direct to me at *Erzeron*, where I shall stay some time. Adieu, dear *Rustan* ; and be assur'd that wherever I am, thou wilt always have a faithful Friend.

Tauris, 15th of the Moon
Saphar, 1711.

LETTER II.

Usbek to the Chief Black Eunuch at his Serail in Ispahan.

THOU art the faithful Guardian of the fairest Women in *Persia*. I have trusted with thee the dearest things in the World. Thou hast in thy Hands the Keys of those fatal Doors, that are never open'd but to me.
Whilst

Whilst thou watchest over the Treasure of my Heart, it is at rest, and in an entire Security. Thou art upon Guard in the Silence of the Night, and the Tumult of the Day. Thy indefatigable Cares support thy Virtue when it staggers. If the Women thou guardest wou'd go away, thou depriv'st them of all hope of doing it. Thou art the Flail of Vice, and the Pillar of Fidelity.

Thou command'st them, and thou art obey'd. Thou dost whatever they will of thee, and they do implicitly whatever thou will'st of them, according to the Laws of the Serail. Thou makest it thy Glory to render them the meanest Services, and with Respect and Fear submittest to their lawful Orders. Thou servest them as the Slave of their Slaves; and as Master in thy turn, commandest them as sovereignly as I do my self, when thou art apprehensive of any Transgression of the Laws of Chastity and Modesty.

Remember that I rais'd thee from nothing; and, from the lowest of my Slaves, lifted thee to the Office thou art now possess'd of; the Charge of the Delights of my Soul. Behave thy self with the most profound Submission towards those that divide my Love: but at the same time make 'em sensible of their extreme Dependance. Provide for them all innocent Pleasures. Deceive their Disquiets; amuse them with Musick, Dances, and delicious Liquors. Perswade them to meet often. If they would go into the Country, carry them thither: But take care that no Man comes near them. Exhort them to Cleanliness, the Image of the Purity of the Soul. Talk frequently of me to them. I long to see them in that charming Place of which themselves are the greatest Ornament.

Tauhis, 12th of the Moon
Saphar, 1711,

LET-

LETTER III.

Zachi to Usbek, at Tauris.

WE order'd the chief Eunuch to carry us into the Country. He will tell thee that no Accident befell us. When we were to cross the River, and quit our Litters; we, according to Custom, put our selves into Cases: Two Slaves carry'd us on their Shoulders, and we escap'd the Eyes of all Men.

How can I live, dear *Usbek*, in thy Serail at *Ispahan*; in those Places where I eternally call to mind my past Pleasures; where my Desires every day suffer fresh Violence? I wander from one Apartment to another, always searching, but I never find thee. Instead of thee, I meet a cruel Remembrance of my lost Happiness. Sometimes I'm in the Place, where I first receiv'd thee in my Arms: some-

times in that where thou decidest the famous Dispute among thy Wives. Each of us pretended to be superior to the other in Beauty. We presented our selves before thee, after having put our Inventions to the Rack, to dress our selves out to the best Advantage. With Pleasure didst thou behold the Wonders of our Art. Thou admiredst the Ardency of our Passion, and the Extent of our Imagination to please thee; but soon didst thou give up all those borrow'd Charms, and fix thy Eyes on the Graces of Nature. Thou destroy'dst all our Work. We must strip our selves of those Ornaments that incommoded rather than serv'd us. We must appear before thee in our native Simplicity. What car'd I for Modesty! I was inspir'd with an Ambition to conquer. Oh happy *Usbek*, what Worlds of Charms were then in thy View? We saw thy Eyes a long while roving from Enchantment to Enchantment. A
long

Persian Letters. II

long while thy Soul remain'd in doubt, where to fix. Every new Grace demanded a Tribute. We were in an Instant cover'd with thy Kisses. Thy curious Glances reach'd the most secret Places. A thousand different Postures are presented to thy View. Thou command'st us with Pleasure, and with Transport we obey. I own, *Usbek*, a Passion stronger than Ambition inspir'd me with the Hopes of pleasing thee. I insensibly perceiv'd that thy Heart was mine. Thou took'st me. Thou left'st me. Again thou took'st me, and I knew how to keep thee. Mine was the Triumph, and Despair my Rivals. It seem'd as if there were only we two in the World, and nothing else in it worth our Care. Wou'd to Heaven my Rivals had had the Courage to stay and see what Tokens of Love I receiv'd from thee. Had they been Witnesses of my Raptures, they wou'd have seen the Difference between my Love and theirs; they wou'd

B 3

have

have seen, that though they might dispute Charms with me, they cou'd never pretend to be so sensible of the Joy as I was — But where am I? whither does this vain Relation lead me? 'Tis a Misfortune not to have been belov'd; but 'tis an Affront to be belov'd no more. Thou leav'st us, *Usbek*, to go rambling in barbarous Climates. How then! Dost thou think 'tis nothing to be belov'd; Ah *Usbek*, thou dost not know what thou losest. I sigh, but my Sighs are not heard; I weep, and thou dost not see my Tears. Love seems to live in this Serail, and thou art so insensible as to fly from it. Ah my dear *Usbek*, how happy wou'dst thou be, didst thou know thy own Happiness!

*From the Serail at Fatimé, the 21st
of the Moon Maharram, 1711.*

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LETTER IV.

Zephis to Usbek, at Erzeron.

THE black Monster has at last resolv'd to throw me into Despair. He wou'd by force take from me my Slave *Zelida*. *Zelida*, who has serv'd me with so much Affection, and has so nice a Hand in whatever relates to Ornaments and Graces. He was not satisfy'd with the Grief that attended this Separation, he wou'd have it accompany'd with Dishonour. The Traytor wou'd insinuate that there was something criminal in the Confidence I plac'd in her; and because he was tir'd with staying behind a Door, where I had posted him, he presum'd to suppose he heard or saw what I never did so much as imagine. I am very unfortunate. Neither my Retirement nor my Virtue can defend me from extravagant Suppositions. A vile Slave at-

B. 4.

tacks

tacks me in thy very Heart, and I must defend my self. No: I value my self too much, to descend to Justifications. I will have no Guarantee for my Conduct, but thy self, but thy Love and mine, and if I must tell thee so, dear *Usbek*, my Tears.

*From the Serail at Fatme the 29th of
the Moen Maharram, 1711.*

LETTER V.

Rustan to Usbek, at Erzeron

THOU art the Subject of all the Discourse of *Ispahan*. They talk of nothing but thy leaving it. Some attribute it to Levity of Mind; others to Chagreen. Thy Friends only defend thee, and they convince no Body. They cannot comprehend that thou canst quit thy Wives, thy Relations, thy Friends, to visit Climates unknown to the
Persians.

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Persian Letters. 15

Persians. Rica's Mother is inconsolable, and demands of thee her Son, whom she says thou hast stolen from her. For my part, dear *Usbek*, I am naturally dispos'd to approve of whatever thou dost, but I cannot forgive thy Absence; and thy Reasons for it have no weight with my Friendship. Adieu. Love me always.

Isfahan, 28th of the Moon
Rebiab 1, 1711.

LETTER VI.

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s

*Usbek to his Friend Nessim,
at Isfahan.*

A Day's Journey from *Erivan* we left the Territories of *Persia*, and enter'd the *Turkish* Dominions. Twelve Days after that we arriv'd at *Erzeron*, where we stay'd three or four Months.

B 5

I.

I must own to thee, *Nessir*, I felt a secret Grief when I lost sight of *Persia*, and found my self in the midst of perfidious *Osmanlins*. According as I advance in the Country of these Infidels, I grow my self more and more an Infidel.

My Country, my Family, my Friends are ever in my Thoughts; my Tenderneſs awakes; a certain Uneasineſs ſeizes me, and ſhews that I have undertaken too much for my Repoſe.

But what troubles me moſt is my Wives. I cannot think of them, without the moſt tormenting Care.

Not that I love them, *Nessir*. I am on that account in a State of Inſenſibility. I have no Deſires. Living in ſo numerous a Serail, I prevented Love, and deſtroy'd him by himſelf. But as inſenſible as I am of Deſire, I am not ſo of Jealouſy; I conſider them as a Company of Women left almoſt to themſelves, with a parcel of ſorry Fellows to take Charge of them. I ſhould

should hardly think my self safe, were my Slaves faithful. But what will come of it, if they should not be so? What melancholy News may I receive in the remote Countries, thro' which I am about to travel? 'Tis a Misfortune, for which my Friends cannot find any Relief. A Serail is a Place, the Secrets of which they ought not to be acquainted with. And what cou'd they do? Had not I better let things pass with Impunity, than make a Noise of them with Correction? Dear *Nessir*, I rest all my Cares in thy Bosom, and 'tis all the Comfort I have in my present Condition.

Erzeron, 10th of the Moon
Rebiab 2, 1711.



LET-

LETTER VII.

Fatme to Usbek, at Erzeron.

'TIS two Months, dear *Usbek*, since thou left'st me, and yet I can scarce think thou art gone; so full is my Heart of Trouble, and so little capable of Reason. I run about the Serail as if thou wert still there, and I cannot satisfy my self to the contrary. What wouldst thou have become of a Woman who loves thee, and was accustomed to thy Embraces; whose only Employment was to give thee new Proofs of her Tenderness? Free by the advantage of her Birth, a Slave by the violence of her Love.

When I marry'd thee, my Eyes had never seen the Face of a Man, and never have they to this day seen any one but * thee; for I do

* *The Women in Persia are shut up more closely than the Turkish or Indian Women.*

not reckon thoſe frightful Creatures, the Eunuchs, to be Men; and 'tis their leaſt Imperfection, that they are not ſo. When I compare thy Beauty with their Deformity, I cannot help thinking my ſelf happy. My Imagination cannot furniſh me with an Idea more raviſhing, than the Charms of thy enchanting Perſon. I ſwear to thee, *Usbek*, if I were allow'd to leave this Place, to which the neceſſity of my Condition confines me; if I could get away from thoſe that are on the Watch all a-round me; if I were to chuſe among all the Men that live in this Capitol of Nations, I ſwear to thee, *Usbek*, thou only ſhould'ſt be my Choice. There cannot be a Man in the World who deſerves to be belov'd, but thee.

Don't think that thy Abſence has made me neglect a Beauty which is dear to thee. Tho' no Body is to have a Sight of me; tho' all the Ornaments of Dreſs which I make uſe of are uſeleſs to thy Happineſs, I ſtrive to entertain my ſelf in a Habit

bit of pleasing. I never go to Bed without being perfum'd with the most delicious Essences. I remember the happy time when thou cam'st to my Arms. A flattering Dream seduces me, and shews me the dear Object of my Love; and as my Imagination is delighted with its Hopes, so it is lost in its Desires. Sometimes I hope thou wilt be tir'd with the Fatigues of Travelling, and return to thy Serail. Night passes away with such pleasing Dreams, which awake or asleep are alike vain. I seek thee by my Side, and thou seem'st to fly from me. The Fire that devours me, dissipates these Enchantments it self, and recalls my wandring Spirits. I find my self then so animated — Thou wilt not believe it, *Usbek*, but 'tis impossible to live in this Condition. The Fire burns in my Veins. Why can't I express to thee what I feel so sensibly! In that Moment, *Usbek*, I wou'd give the Empire of the World for one Kiss of thee. How unhappy is the Woman,

man, whoſe Deſires are ſo violent, to be deprived of him who can only ſatisfy them ; who, deliver'd up to her ſelf, and having nothing to divert her, muſt live in a conſtant courſe of Sighs, and the Fury of a provok'd Paſſion ; who, far from being happy her ſelf, has not the Advantage of ſerving to make another ſo. Uſeleſs Ornament of a Serail, kept for the Honour and not for the Happineſs of her Husband.

You Men are very cruel ; you are pleas'd that we have Deſires which we cannot ſatisfie, and you treat us as tho' we had none ; tho' you would be very ſorry if we had not. You believe they will be enflam'd at ſight of you, after the longeſt Mortifications. A Man cannot eaſily make himſelf be lov'd ; and the quicker way is to obtain from our Complexion, what you dare not hope from your Merit.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear *Usbek*, Adieu. Assure thy self that I live only to adore thee; my Soul is full of thee; and thy Absence, instead of making me forget thee, would encrease my Love, if it was possible for it to be more violent.

*From the Serail at Ispahan
the 12th of the Moon Re-
biab 1, 1711.*

LETTER VIII.

*Usbek to his Friend Rustan,
at Ispahan.*

I Receiv'd yours at *Erzeron*, where I still remain. I did not doubt but my Departure would make a Noise, nor am I in pain about it. What wouldst thou have me pursue; the Prudence of my Enemies, or my own?

I was very young when I came first to Court. I may presume to say,

say, my Heart was not corrupted there. I form'd a great Design to my self, and durst even there be Virtuous. Assoon as I knew Vice I fled it; but drew nearer it afterwards, to pull off its Mask. I carry'd Truth as far as the foot of the Throne. I talkt a Language till then unknown. I put Flattery out of countenance, and at the same time surpriz'd both the Adorers and the Idol.

But when I found my Sincerity had made me Enemies, that the Ministers were jealous of me, and I was not at all in favour with the Prince; that in a corrupt Court I could not support my self by solid Virtue, I resolv'd to quit it. I feign'd a great attachment to the Sciences; and by feigning it some time, did indeed acquire it. I no more concern'd my self with Affairs, but retir'd to a Country-House. This Retirement had its Inconveniencies. I was still expos'd to the Malice of my Enemies,
and

and had hardly any way left to defend my self against it. Some secret Advice oblig'd me to look to my self; I could think of no better Security than Exile; and my Retirement from Court furnish'd me with a plausible Pretence for it. I waited on the King, and told him the Desire I had to be instructed in the Sciences of the West. I insinuated to him, that my Travels might be useful to the Publick. I found Favour in his sight. I departed, and deprived my Enemies of a Victim.

This, *Rustan*, was the true Motive of my Travels. Let *Ispahan* talk, defend me not but to such as love me; leave my Enemies to their malicious Interpretations. I should be too happy if it was the only Evil that could befall me.

They talk of me at this time, perhaps hereafter I shall be too much forgotten, and that my Friends——No, *Rustan*, I will not give way to this melancholy Thought.

Thought. I ſhall always be dear to them, and depend upon their Fidelity, as I do on thine.

Erzeron, the 20th of the Moon
Gemmadi 2. 1711.

LETTER IX.

*The Chief Eunuch to Ibbi, at
Erzeron.*

THOU followeſt thy ancient Maſter in his Travels. Thou paſſeſt thro' Provinces and Kingdoms. No Chagrins can make any Impreſſion upon thee. Every moment preſents thee with ſomething new. Whatever thou ſeeſt diverts thee, and makes thy Time paſs away imperceptibly.

'Tis not the ſame with me, who am ſhut up in a terrible Priſon, always ſurrounded with the ſame Objects, and tormented with the ſame Cares ; under the weight of which,
and

and fifty Years Disquiets, I groan, and am ready to sink. I can truly say, that in the whole course of a long Life, I have not known one chearful Day, nor one Moment's Ease. When my Master came to the cruel Resolution to trust his Women with me, and seduced me by a thousand Promises and Threats, to part with my self for ever; being weary of painful Service, I resolv'd to sacrifice my Passions to my Repose and my Fortune. Wretch as I was! I foresaw what I shou'd not suffer, but not what I shou'd. I flatter'd my self with the Gain, but did not consider the Loss. I hop'd to be deliver'd from the Assaults of Love, by an Impotence of satisfying it. Alas! the Effect of the Passions is extinguish'd in me, without extinguishing the Cause; and very far from relieving me, mine were continually enrag'd by the Objects with which I was environ'd. I enter'd the Serail, where every thing inspir'd me with
Regret

Regret for the Loss I had sustain'd.
Every minute offer'd new Excite-
ments to Desire. The natural Gra-
ces which charm'd my Eyes, at
the same time prey'd upon my
Heart. The Beauties that were
expos'd to me, made me look on
the Man that possess'd them with the
most wracking Envy. In this
Thought, I could not lead a Lady
to my Master's Bed, I could not
serve her in her Undress, but as
soon as I return'd to my Chamber
my Heart was seiz'd with Rage,
and my Soul with horrid De-
spair.

Such was my miserable Youth.
I was my self my only Confident.
Consum'd with Sorrow and Care,
my Life was my greatest Burthen ;
and I was forc'd to look, as severely
as I cou'd, on those very Women
whom I desir'd to gaze on with
the most tender Glances. I shou'd
have been ruin'd, had they observ'd
me. What Advantage wou'd they
not have taken of it?

I remember when I once waited on a Lady at her Bath, I was so transported, that I was no more my own Master, and had the Boldness to lay my Hand on a most formidable Place. I presently thought of what I had done, and that that Day would be my last. However I had the good luck to escape the thousand Deaths which threaten'd me; but the Beauty, who was the Cause and the Witness of my Weakness, made me pay dear for her Silence, and often oblig'd me afterwards to make Compliances, every one of which put my Life in danger.

At last, the Fire of Youth is past away. I am old, and on that account in a State of Tranquility. I look on the Women with Indifference, and return upon them the same Contempt, and the same Torments, which they have made me suffer. I always call to mind that I was born to command them; and methinks I become a Man again on certain occasions, where my Duty
autho-

authorizes me to do it still. I hate them, since I ceas'd to love them, and Reason has remov'd the Veil which conceal'd their Weaknesses. Tho' I guard them for another, I have a secret Pleasure in being obey'd by them; and when I deprive them of what they would have, it seems as if it was on my own account, and I have an indirect Satisfaction in it. I am like a little Emperor in the Serail; and my Ambition, the only Passion that is left me, receives a little Contentment in that. I pride in the Dependance they have upon me, and in being always necessary to them. I willingly take upon me the Hatred of all these Women, which fixes me the faster in my Office; nor do they find an Ingrate in me. I am always a Spy upon their most innocent Pleasures; and stand always before them like an immoveable Barrier. They form Projects, and I on a sudden put a stop to them. I am prepar'd with Repulses, and have

have Scruples always at hand, whenever they propose any thing. I am continually talking to them of Duty, Virtue, Chastity, Modesty; and eternally teasing them with the Weakness of their Sex, and the Authority I have over them. I then complain of the Obligation I lye under, to use such Severity; and seem as if I would have them believe I had no other Motive than their Interest, and an extream Desire to serve them.

Notwithstanding all this, I too have my Disgusts as well as they; and, in my turn, meet with an infinite variety of Vexations. These revengeful Creatures are every day projecting how to be quit with me; and so they are sometimes, with a vengeance. The turns of Rule between us, are like the ebbings and flowings of the Sea. They charge me daily with the most mortifying Services. They affect a Scorn which is without Example. And, without any respect to my
Years,

Years, they frequently call me up ten times a-night, and that for the least Trifles. I'm wearied to death with their repeated Orders, Commands, Employments, and Caprices. They relieve one another to keep me in Exercise, and one wou'd think there's a Succession of Whimseys among them. Sometimes they please themselves with giving me the Alarm; and oblige me to redouble my Cares, by false Insinuations against one another. Sometimes they let me know, that a young Man has been seen lurking about the Walls. At other times, that a Noise has been heard, or a Letter been deliver'd. All this gives me Disquiet; and they do but laugh at it. It tickles them to see how I am vex'd at it. Sometimes they'll tye me behind a Door, and keep me there Night and Day. They are very skilful in counterfeiting Diseases, Swoonings, Frights. They never want a Pretence to gain their Point of me.

At such times I'm bound to a blind Obedience, and a Complaisance without limits. For a Man in my Office to refuse them on these occasions, wou'd be a thing never heard of; and if I should dispute their Orders, 'twould be a sufficient warrant for them to chastise me. I had rather, dear *Ibbi*, lose my Life, than be humbled after that base manner.

This is not all. I am never sure of my Master's Favour a moment, having so many Enemies in his Heart always contriving how to ruin me. And these Enemies have certain Moments in which I can't be heard; Moments in which he can refuse them nothing, and in which I must needs be always in the wrong. I lead Women enrag'd to the Bed of my Master. Do you think they'll do me any Service, and that my Side will be the strongest? May not I well be afraid of their Tears, their Sighs, their Embraces, and even their Pleasures. They are on
the

the Scene of their Triumphs, and their Charms become terrible to me. Present Services in a minute efface all my past ones; and who can answer for a Master who is no longer himself?

How often have I lain down in Favour, and risen in Disgrace? What had I done the day that I was so basely-lash'd round the Serail? I left a Woman in my Master's Arms: As soon as she saw he was inflam'd, she pour'd out a torrent of Tears, : She complain'd, and manag'd her Complaints so well, that they grew upon her as fast as Love grew upon him. How cou'd I have defended my self in so critical a minute? I was undone when I least thought of it. I was the Victim of an amorous Negotiation, and a Treaty form'd by Sighs. Such, dear *Ibbi*, is the cruel Condition in which I have always liv'd.

34 *Persian Letters.*

How happy art thou, whose Duty is confin'd only to the Person of *Usbek*. 'Tis easie for thee to please him, and preserve his good Graces as long as thou liv'st.

*From the Serail at Ispahan, the last
of the Moon Saphar, 1711.*

LETTER X.

Mirza to his Friend *Usbek*,
at Erzeron.

THOU wert the only Man that could make me amends for *Rica*'s Absence, and no body but *Rica* cou'd give me Comfort in thine. Thou art wanting, *Usbek*; thou wert the Soul of our Society; and how hard is it to break those Ties that were fasten'd by Friendship and Reason? We dispute here very much, and Morals are generally the Subject. Yesterday the Question was, whether Pleasure is Happiness, and

and Felicity consists in the Satisfaction of the Senses, or the Practice of Virtue? I have often heard thee say, that Men were born to be virtuous; and that Justice is a Quality as necessary to them as Existence; pr'ythee explain to me what thou mean'st by it.

I have discours'd with the *Mol-lacks*, who torment me with Passages out of the *Alcoran*; for I do not talk to them as a true Believer, but as a Man, a Citizen, a Father of a Family.

LETTER XI.

Usbek to Mirza at Ispahan.

THOU dost renounce thy own Reason, to make a Tryal of mine. Thou descendest to consult me: Thou believest me capable of instructing thee. Dear *Mirza*, there is something that flatters me, more

C 3 than

than the good Opinion thou hast conceiv'd of me, and that is thy Friendship which procur'd it.

To discharge what thou requirest of me, I don't think there's need of making use of very abstracted Reasons. There are certain Truths which 'tis not enough to convince Men of, they must also be made sensible of them. Such are the Truths of Morals. Perhaps this Piece of History will touch thee, more than a Philosophical Thesis.

There is a People among the *Arabians* call'd *Troglodites*, who descend from the ancient *Troglodites*, who according to Historiens were more like Beasts than Men. These were not so deform'd indeed, they were not hairy like Bears, they did not hiss, they had two Eyes; but they were so wicked and wild that they had no Principle of Equity or Justice among them.

They had a King of a foreign Origine, who to correct the Wick-
edness

edness of their Nature treated them severely; but they rose against him, killed him, and rooted out all the Royal Family.

This Blow being struck, they assembled together to settle a Government, and after much Debate they created Magistrates; but they were scarce chosen before they became insupportable, and they massacred them also.

Deliver'd of this new Yoke, they follow'd nothing but the Dictates of their savage Natures. They all agreed they would have no Governor; that every one should pursue his own Interests, without consulting those of other Men. This unanimous Resolution was extremely grateful to all the *Troglodites*. They cry'd, Why should I work my self to death for Persons whom I'm not at all concern'd for? I'll mind my self only. I'll live happy. What is't to me whether others are so or not? What I want I'll have; and

if I have it, I shan't matter how miserable all the other *Troglodites* are.

'Twas then Seed Time; and every one said, I'll till my Ground only for just so much Corn as is necessary for my own Subsistence. More than I need my self, is superfluous. I'll not labour for nothing.

The Lands of this little Kingdom were not all alike fruitful. Some were dry, some were mountainous; and the lower Grounds were water'd with several Springs. There happen'd a great Drouth this Year, insomuch that the Up-lands fail'd entirely, whereas the Low-Lands water'd with the Springs were very fruitful. Thus the Inhabitants of the Mountains perish'd for want of Bread: Those of the Low Country being so hard-hearted as to deny them a Portion of their Harvest.

The next Year was a wet Season. The Up-lands abounded with Corn, and the Lower were drown'd.

Half

Half of the Nation again cry'd out Famine; but the Mountainers were as hard-hearted as the Inhabitants of the Low-Lands had been.

One of the principal Men in the Country had a very handsome Wife. His Neighbour fell in Love with her, and took her from him. This occaſion'd a great Quarrel, and after much Scolding and many Blows, they agreed to refer the Matter to a *Troglodite*, who, while the Republick laſted, had ſome Credit among them. They went to him, and were going to tell him their Caſe; but he cut them ſhort: What matter's it to me, ſaid he, which of you has the Woman? I muſt look after my Ground, and not waſte my Time upon your Affairs, to the Detriment of my own. Pray leave me, and don't diſturb me with your Differences. At theſe words he went about his buſineſs. The Ravisher, who was the ſtronger Man of the two, ſwore he wou'd rather loſe his Life than part with

C 5 the

the Woman; and the Husband was forc'd to return home, cursing the Injustice of his Neighbour, and the Moroseness of the Judge. As he was going to his House, he met with a young handsome Woman coming from the Well. He had no Woman of his own. This pleased him; and he was much more pleas'd when he understood 'twas the Wife of the Man whom he had chosen to be the Judge between him and the Ravisher, and who had made so light of the Case. He took her, and carry'd her home with him.

There was a Man who had a Field pretty fertile, which he cultivated with Care. Two of his Neighbours join'd together, drove him out of his House, and possess'd themselves of his Field. They enter'd into a League to defend themselves against all those that should endeavour to dispossess them, and maintain'd themselves in it several Months: But one of
them

them being weary of enjoying in Partnership what he might have all to himself, kill'd the other, and became sole Master of the Field. His Empire was of short duration. Two *Troglodites* came and fell upon him; he was too weak for them both, and they murder'd him, as he had done his Partner.

A *Troglodite*, who was almost naked, saw some Cloth to be sold. He demanded the Price. Says the Draper to himself, I ought not indeed to have more for my Cloth than would purchase two Bushels of Wheat, but I'll have as much as shall buy me eight Bushels. The Man wanted the Cloth, and must pay what the Draper demanded. This is pretty well, says the Draper; I shall have Bread enough now. How is that, reply'd his Customer? Do you want Corn? I have some to sell; but perhaps the Price will startle you, for you know Wheat is very dear, and the Famine spreads almost every where; but give me my

my Money back, and you shall have a Bushel; and you shan't have it cheaper, tho' you die of Hunger.

A mortal Distemper in the mean while rag'd in the Country. An able Physician arriv'd there out of a neighbouring one. His Remedies were so effectual, that they cur'd all who took them. When the Sickness was over, he went to those that he had cur'd, to be paid for the Cure. But he met with Denials only. He return'd home worn out with the Fatigue of his Journey, and soon after understood that the same Distemper had again taken the *Troglodites*, and rag'd worse than ever among that ungrateful People. They came to him this time, and he said to them, Go, unjust Men as you are; there is a Poison in your Souls more mortal than the Sickness you would be cur'd of. You don't deserve a dwelling-place upon Earth. You know not what Humanity is, and are ignorant of the Rules of Equity.

ty. I should think I offended the Gods who would punish you, if I oppos'd the Justice of their wrath.

Erzeron, 3d of the Moon
Gemmadi 2, 1711.

LETTER XII.

Usbek to the same, at Ispahan.

THOU hast seen, dear *Mirza*, how the *Troglodites* perish'd by their own Wickedness, and were the Victims of their own Injustice. Of so many Families as were in the Nation, two only were left, who escap'd in the general Destruction. These two men were very singular. They had some knowledge of Humanity and Justice. They lov'd Virtue, and were united as much by the Rectitude of their own Minds, as by the Corruption of their Countrymens. They were Witnesses of the common

mon Desolation, and no farther concern'd in it than they were led by Pity. The Destruction of their Neighbours was a Motive of farther Union. They labour'd with unusual Sollicitude for the common Interest. They had no Differences, but such as are the effect of a sweet and tender Friendship. They liv'd a happy and peaceful Life in a bye Part of the Country, separate from the rest of the Inhabitants, who were not worthy of them. The Soil seem'd to produce of it self, so blest was the Labour of their pure Hands.

They lov'd their Wives, and were tenderly belov'd by them. They were wholly intent upon educating their Children to Virtue. They continually represented to them the Calamities of their Countrymen, and often set that moving Example before their Eyes. They above all things instill'd into them this Principle, that every private Man's Interest is inseparable

ble from the Interest of the Community. To divide it, is Ruin. That Virtue is not a thing which should be troublesome to us, nor ought the Exercise of it to give us Pain; and that Justice to another, is Charity to our selves.

They had soon the Consolation of virtuous Fathers; which is, to have Children like themselves. The young People who grew up under them, encreas'd by happy Marriages. The Number augmented. Union was preserv'd. Virtue, instead of being weaken'd, was fortify'd in a Multitude, and spread every where by Example.

Who can describe now the Happiness of the *Troglodites*? So just a People must needs be dear to the Gods. As soon as they open'd their Eyes to know them, they learnt to fear them; Religion refin'd their Morals, and civiliz'd the rudeness of Nature.

They instituted Feasts to the Honour of the Gods. The young Men

46 *Persian Letters.*

Men and Maidens adorn'd with Flowers, celebrated the Rites with Dances, and the soft Notes of Sylvan Musick. Banquets succèd-ed, and their Joy was as frugal as it was universal. Plain Nature spoke in these Assemblies. Here it was that Hearts were given and taken. Here the Blushes of modest Virgins betray'd those Sentiments, which were confirm'd by the Consent of Fathers; and here tender Mothers pleas'd themselves with the agreeable foresight of their Daughters future Happiness, in the Love and Fidelity of their Husbands. The Blessings of Heaven were implor'd in Temples. Those Blessings did not consist in Riches, and a burthensome Abundance. Such Wishes were unworthy the happy *Troglodites*. They pray'd for them, for others. For themselves, their Father's Health, their Brother's Friendship, their Wive's Love, their Children's Affection and Obedience, were the
only

only Subjects of their Prayers. The Maidens brought thither the dear Sacrifice of their Heart, and demanded nothing of the Gods but that they might render a *Troglodite* happy

In the Evening, when the Flocks quitted the Fields, and the tir'd Oxen brought home the Plough; these innocent People met, and over a light Repast sung the Crimes and Punishment of the ancient *Troglodites*; and how Virtue and Felicity sprung up with the rising Generation. They then sung the Greatness of the Gods, their Favours to Men who address themselves to them, and their inevitable Wrath against those that do not fear them. They describ'd the Sweets of a Country Life, and the Pleasures of a State, always adorn'd with Innocence: After which they gave themselves up to those soft Slumbers that are never disturb'd by Care and Sorrow.

Nature

Nature contributes to their Desires, as much as to their Necessities. Covetousness is a stranger in the blessed Clime. They make Presents, and the Giver always thinks he has the advantage. The Nation of the *Troglodites* look on themselves as one Family only. Their Flocks and Herds were almost always confounded, and the only trouble which they commonly spar'd themselves was that of dividing them.

Erzeron, the 6th of the Moon
Gemmadi 1, 1711.

LETTER XIII.

Usbek to the same.

I Cannot talk enough to thee of the Virtue of the *Troglodites*. One of them said once, My Father is to rise to-morrow betimes to go to Plough; I'll be up two hours before him, and when he comes to his.

his Field he ſhall find it ready plough'd to his hand.

Said another to himſelf, My Siſter ſeems to have a kindneſs for ſuch a young *Troglodite*, a Kinſman of ours; I'll talk to my Father, and get him to conſent to the Marriage.

Another was told, Some Robbers have ſtole your Kine: I am ſorry for't, ſays he; there was a white Heifer, which I deſign'd for a Sacrifice to the Gods.

Another was heard to ſay, I muſt go to the Temple, and return Thanks to the Gods for the Recovery of my Brother, who is ſo dear to my Father and me.

There's a Field bordering on my Father's, and thoſe that work there are expos'd to the Heats of the Sun; I muſt plant ſome Trees there, that thoſe poor Men may repoſe themſelves ſometimes under their ſhade.

Several *Troglodites* being on a time met together, an old Man talk'd to a young one whom he ſuſpected.

suspected to have done an ill Action, and reproached him for doing it. The young *Troglodites* said, We don't believe he is guilty of it; but if he is, may he dye the last of his Family.

A *Troglodite* was told, Strangers have plunder'd your House and carry'd every thing away with them; If it is not unjust, replies he, I wish the Gods may give them longer Use of it than I have had.

So much Prosperity was not look'd upon without Envy. The Neighbouring People assembled, and under a vain Pretext resolved to take from them their Sheep and Cattel. When the *Troglodites* heard of it, they sent Ambassadors to them, who spoke to this Effect.

What have the *Troglodites* done to you? Have they robb'd you of your Cattel or Sheep? Have they wasted your Fields? No, we are just; we fear the Gods. What then would you have of us? Is it Wool to make you Cloaths? Will you have the Milk of our Cows,

or the Fruits of our Land? Lay down your Arms; come to us, and you shall have all of them. But we swear by all that is sacred, if you enter our Country as Enemies, we'll look upon you as an unjust People, and treat you as we would wild Beasts.

Their Words were receiv'd with Contempt. These Savages enter'd the Lands of the *Troglodites*, whom they took to have no other Defence than their Innocence.

But they were well prepar'd to defend themselves; they plac'd their Wives and Children in the midst of them. They were surpriz'd at the Injustice, and not at the Number of their Enemies. An unusual Warmth seiz'd their Breasts. One wou'd die for his Father; another for his Wife and Children; this for his Brethren, that for his Friends: All of them for the *Troglodite* Nation. The Post of him that expired, was soon fill'd by another, who, besides the
com-

common Cause, had the Death of a private Person to revenge.

Such was the Combat of Injustice and Virtue. Those base Wretches who fought only Booty, were not asham'd to fly, and gave way to the Virtue of the *Troglodites*, even without being touch'd with it.

Erzeron, the 9th of the Moon
Gemmadi 2, 1711.

LETTER XIV.

Usbek to the same.

AS the *Troglodites* daily encreas'd in numbers, they thought it proper for them to chuse a King. They agreed that they ought to confer the Crown on the man that was most just; and cast their Eyes on one who was equally venerable for his Age and his Virtue. He wou'd not assist at the Assembly. He shut himself up in his House.

His

His Heart was overcome with Heaviness.

When Deputies came to him to inform him of the Choice, God forbid, cries he, I shou'd do so much Injury to the *Troglodites*, as to think there is no Person among them more just than I am. You tender me the Crown, and if you insist upon it, I must accept of it. But assure your selves I shall dye with Grief for having seen the *Troglodites* born free, and now to see them in Subjection. At these words, he burst out into Tears; Unhappy Day, cry'd he, Why did I live so long? He then added, in a severer Tone, I see, oh ye *Troglodites*, what it is. Your Virtue begins to be too heavy for you. In the condition you at this time are, you must be virtuous in spite of your selves. You can't subsist without it, but would fall into the Miseries of your Fore-fathers. This Yoke seems hard to you. You had rather submit to a Prince,

Prince, and obey his Laws, less rigorous than your Morals. You know you may then satisfy your Ambition, acquire Riches, and languish in vile Luxury ; and provided you avoid committing great Crimes, you will have no need of Virtue. He stopp'd a moment, and his Tears flow'd faster than ever. Ah ! what wou'd you have me do ? How can I lay my Commands on a *Troglodite* ? Wou'd you that he shou'd do a virtuous Action because I command it ? Would he not do it of himself, and from an Instinct of nature only ? Oh *Troglodites*, I'm almost at the end of my Days. My Blood is frozen in my Veins. I shall soon see again your pious Ancestors. Why would you have me afflict them, why wou'd you oblige me to tell them, that I left you under any other Yoke than that of Virtue ?

Erzeron, the 10th of the Moon
Gemmadi 2, 1711.

LET-

LETTER XV.

Usbek to Mollack Mehemet
Ali, Guardian of the Three
Tombs.

WHY dost thou live in the
Tombs, divine *Mollack*?
Thou art more made for the So-
journ of the Stars. Thou hid'st thy
self without doubt for fear of dark-
ning the Sun. Thou hast no Spots,
like that Star; but, like him, thou
art hid in Clouds.

Thy Science is an Abyss more
profound than the Ocean; thy
Wit more piercing than *Zufager*,
that Sword of *Hali*, which had
two Points. Thou know'st what
passes in the nine Choirs of the
Celestial Powers. Thou readest
the *Alcoran* on the Breast of our
divine Prophet; and when thou
findest any obscure Passage, an An-
gel

gel by his order displays his rapid wings, and descends from the Throne to reveal to thee the Secret.

By thy means, I may have an intimate Correspondence with the Cherubims; for, in fine, thou thirteenth *Iman*, art not thou the Center where Heaven and Earth meet, and the Point of Communication between the Abyss and the Empyrean?

I'm in the middle of a profane People, suffer me to purifie my self with thee, suffer me to turn my Visage towards the sacred Place which thou inhabitest. Distinguish me from the Wicked, as the white Thread at the rising of *Aurora* is distinguish'd from the black. Assist me with thy Counsels, take care of my Soul, make it drunk with the Spirit of the Prophets, feed it with the Science of Paradise, and suffer me to lay its Wounds at thy Feet. Direct thy holy Letters to me at

Erze-

Erzeron, where I shall stay some Months.

Erzeron, the 11th of the Moon.
Gemmadi 2, 1711.

LETTER XVI.

Usbek to the same.

I Cannot calm my Impatience, divine *Mollack*; I cannot wait for thy sublime Answer. I have Doubts, and they must be satisfy'd. I find my Reason goes a-stray. Do thou bring it back into the right Path. Enlighten me, thou Source of Light. Fulminate with thy heavenly Pen, the Difficulties I am about to propose to thee. Make me pity my self, and blush at the Question I'm going to ask.

Why is it that our Legislator forbids us the use of Swine's Flesh, and all Meats which he calls unclean? Why are we forbidden to

touch a Corpse, and commanded to wash our Bodies incessantly to purifie our Souls? Methinks things are not, in themselves, either pure or impure. I can't conceive any Quality inherent to the Subject, which can render them such. Dirt seems filthy to us, only because it offends our sight, or some other sense; but is no more so in it self, than Gold or Jewels. The Idea of filthiness, contracted by touching a Corpse, comes only from a certain natural Repugnance which we have to it. If the Bodies of such as do not wash them, don't offend either the smell or the sight; how cou'd one imagine them to be impure?

The Senses, divine *Mollack*, ought therefore to be the sole Judges of the purity or impurity of things. But as Objects do not affect all Men after the same manner; so that which gives an agreeable Sensation to one, may produce a distasteful one in another; from whence

whence it follows, that the Testimony of Sense can't serve for a Rule here, unless we say that every one may decide the point according to his fancy; and distinguish, as far as it relates to himself, things pure, from such as are not so.

Would not this, sacred *Mollack*, overturn all the Distinctions established by our Holy Prophet, together with the fundamental Points of that Law, which was written with the Finger of an Angel?

Erzeron, the 20th of the Moon
Gemmadi 2, 1711.

LETTER XVII.

Mehemet Ali, *Servant of the Prophets*, to Usbek at Erzeron.

YOU always propose Questions to us that have been answered a thousand times already by our Holy Prophet. Why do not you
D 3 read

read the Traditions of the Doctors? Why do you not drink at that pure stream of all Wisdom? You wou'd there find all your doubts resolved.

Wretch, always perplexed with the vile things of Earth, thou hast never with a fixed look behold those of Heaven; and thou revereſt the condition of the *Mollahs*, without daring either to embrace or follow it.

Profane Mortals that ye are, who never dive into the Secrets of the Eternal; your Lights are no better than the thick darkness of the Abyss; and the reasonings of your Soul are like the dust which your feet kicks up when the Sun is in its meridian height in the scorching month of *Chabban*.

Neither does the Zenith of your Minds rise up even to the *Nadir* of that of the meanest of the * *Imaums*: Your vain Philosophy

* This word is more in use among the Turks, than among the Persians.

is that flash of lightning which is the forerunner of Tempest and Darkness; you are in the midst of the storm, and are tost about with every blast of wind.

It is a very easie matter to solve your difficulty: We need only relate to you what happened one day to our Holy Prophet, when being tempted by the Christians, and tried by the Jews, he equally confounded both.

The Jew *Abdias Ibesalon* * asked him why God had forbidden the use of swine's-flesh: Not without reason, answered the Prophet: it is an unclean beast, and I will convince you thereof. He moulded the shape of a Man with some dirt in his hand; he threw it to the ground, and cried, Arise. Immediately a man arose, and said, I am *Japhet* the Son of *Noah*. Was thy hair as white when thou de-

* A Mahometan Tradition.

parted'st this life, said the Holy Prophet, as it is now? No, replied he: but when thou awakened'st me, I thought the day of Judgment had been come, and the dread of that was so great upon me, that my hair suddenly changed to white.

Well, said the Sent of God, relate to me the whole History of *Noah's Ark*. *Japhet* obey'd, and gave a particular account of every thing that pass'd the first months: and then proceeded as follows.

We flung the ordure of all the Animals to one side of the Ark, which made it lean so much that way, that we were all in a sad fright about it, especially our wives, who squawled most heartily. Our Father *Noah*, going to take counsel with the Lord, he commanded him to take the Elephant, and set him with his head toward the side that leaned. That great Animal was so plentiful in his Evacuations, that there sprung from them a Hog. Dost thou not believe,

Usbek,

Usbek, that from that day we have abstained from this Beast, and looked upon it as Unclean ?

But as the Hog every day wallowed in the Dung, and stirred it about, there arose such a stench in the Ark, that he himself cou'd not forbear sneezing ; and out of his nose fell a Rat, which went about gnawing and nibbling of every thing that came in his way : which grew so insupportable to *Noah*, that he thought it necessary to consult God once more. He ordered him to give the Lyon a great knock of the forehead, who thereupon sneezed too, and from his nose leaped a Cat. Dost thou not think these Animals are unclean also ? Answer me.

When therefore thou dost not perceive the reason of the impurity of certain things, it is because thou art ignorant of many others, and art not informed of what hath past between God, the Angels and Men. Thou knowest nothing of

D 5

the

64 *Persian Letters.*

the History of Eternity : Thou hast not read the Books penned in Heaven : what has been revealed to thee is but a very small part of the Divine Library ; and even those who, like us, are admitted something further into it in this life, are still in obscurity and darkness. Adieu. *Mahomet* be in thy Heart.

Com, *the last of the Moon*
Chahban, 1711.

L E T T E R XVIII.

*Usbek to his Friend Rustan,
at Ispahan.*

WE sojourn'd but eight days at *Tocat* : after a march of five and thirty days, we are now arrived at *Smirna*. All the way from *Tocat* to *Smirna* we do not meet with one single Town worth notice. I beheld with amazement the weakness of the Empire of the *Osmons* : that huge distemper'd Body

dy does not support it self by a mild and temperate regimen ; but by violent remedies, which are incessantly corroding and exhausting its strength.

The Bashaws, who obtain their employments only by means of their money, enter upon their Provinces naked, and fall to plundering of them as if they were conquer'd Places. An insolent Soldiery is subject to nothing but his caprice: the Towns are dismantled ; the Cities desert ; the Countries desolate ; the manure of the Fields and Traffic entirely neglected.

Impunity reigns in this severe Government: the Christians, who cultivate the Lands ; the Jews, who collect the Tributes ; are exposed to a thousand violences.

The property in the Lands is uncertain, and consequently the desire of improving them slackened : no Title, no Possession will hold against the caprice of the Governour.

These

These *Barbarians* have so far deserted all the Arts that they have neglected even the Art Military: while the Nations of *Europe* grow more and more knowing every day, they remain in their ancient ignorance; and seldom mind to take advantage of their new inventions, till they have been soundly drubbed by means of them a thousand times.

They have no experience at Sea, no expertness at handling the tackle: they say, a poor handful of Christians that issue from a Rock* make all the *Ottomans* tremble, and harraßs the whole Empire.

Uncapable of Trade themselves, they bear with regret to see the *Europeans* always laborious and enterprizing, carrying it on for them: they fancy they are mighty gracious to those strangers in allowing them to bring them Riches.

In all the vast extent of Country which I have traversed, I found

* He probably means the *Knights* of Malta only

only *Smirna* that could be reckoned a rich or potent City: it is the *Europeans* that make it so; and it is no fault of the *Turks* that it is not like all the rest.

From hence, my dear *Rustan*, you may form a just notion of this Empire, which in less than two Ages will be the Stage of some Conqueror's Triumphs.

Smirna, 2d of the Moon
Rahmazan, 1711.

LETTER XIX.

*Usbek to Zachi his Wife, at
the Seraglio of Ispahan.*

YOU have offended me, *Zachi*; and I feel Emotions in my heart which you ought to tremble at, if my remote absence did not allow you time to change your conduct, and appease the violent jealousy with which I am tortured.

I

I am informed you were caught alone with *Nadir* the white Eunuch, whose life shall be accountable for his infidelity and treachery. How could you forget that it is not lawful for you to receive a white Eunuch into your chamber, while you have black ones appointed for your service? It will be in vain to tell me that Eunuchs are not Men, and that your virtue sets you above all thoughts that might arise in you from the incompleateness of your resemblance. This is sufficient neither for you nor for me: for you, because you do a thing forbidden by the Laws of the Seraglio: for me, in that you rob me of my honour, by exposing your self to the looks; to the looks! perhaps to the attempts of a Villain that may have polluted you by his crimes, and yet more by his regrets and the despair of his impotence.

You will perhaps alledge that you have ever been faithful to me.

Was

Was it in your power to be otherwise? How cou'd you deceive the vigilance of those black Eunuchs that are so scandaliz'd at the life you lead? How cou'd you break those Doors and Bolts with which you are secured? You boast of a Virtue which is not free: and perhaps your impure wishes have a thousand times robbed you of the merit and value of the fidelity you are so proud of.

I will grant you have not been guilty of all that I have reason to suspect; that the Traytor durst not touch you with his sacrilegious hands; that you refused to lavish to his sight the delights of his Master; that covered with your habit you left that weak barrier between him and you; nay that he himself, struck with a holy respect, bent his eyes to earth; and fainting in his rashness, trembled at the thoughts of the Punishments he was bringing on himself: tho' all this were true, it is no less so that
you

you have done a thing contrary to your duty: and if you have violated that *gratis*, without compleating your disorderly wishes, what wou'd you have done to satisfie them? What wou'd you do if you cou'd get out of that Sacred Place, which seems a melancholly Prison to you, tho' to your Companions it is a happy *Asylum* against the attacks of Vice, a Holy Temple where your Sex loses its weakness, and comes to be invincible in spite of all the disadvantages of Nature? What wou'd you do if you were left to your own care, and had nothing to defend you but your Love to me which is grievously wounded, and your Duty which you have so unworthily betray'd? How Blessed are the Manners of the Country where you live, which takes care to guard you from the attempts of the vilest Slaves! You ought to return me a thousand thanks for the confinement I oblige you to live in, since to that only
it

it is owing that you deserve to Live at all.

You cannot endure the Chief of the Eunuchs, because he always keeps a watchful eye upon your conduct, and gives you prudent Counsels: his Ugliness, you say, is so frightful that you cannot bear to look at him; as if handsome objects were proper in such a post as his: what afflicts you is the not having your white Eunuch, who dishonours you, in his room.

But what has your chief Slave done? She has told you that the familiarities you take with that young Hussy *Zelide* are not decent; there's the cause of your aversion to her.

I ought, *Zachi*, to be a stern Judge; but instead of that I am a kind Husband, that wishes to find you innocent. The Love I have for my new wife *Roxana*, has lessened none of the tenderness I ought to have for you who are no less handsome: I share my love between

tween you two ; and *Roxana* has no advantage over you, but the addition which Virtue gives to Beauty.

Smirna, 12th of the Moon
Zilcade, 1712.

LETTER XX.

*Usbek to the Chief of the
White Eunuchs.*

YOU ought to tremble as you open this Letter, or you shou'd rather have trembled when you allowed of the treachery of *Nadir* : You that in a cold languishing old Age may not without guilt lift your eyes upon the dreadful objects of my love ; you who are never allowed to set a sacrilegious foot over the threshold of the tremendous place which shuts them up from all human eyes ; you suffer those whose government you are intrusted with, to do what you durst

durst not presume to do your self; not discerning the thunder which is just ready to fall upon them and you.

And what are you but wretched tools which I can break at pleasure; who exist but just as long as you obey; who were born only to live under my Laws, or to die at my nod; who breathe no longer than my happiness, my love or even my jealousy have occasion for such wretches; in short who have no choice but duty; no Soul but my Will; no Hope, but my Pleasure?

I know that some of my wives are impatient under the severe laws of their duty; the continual presence of a black Eunuch grows irksome to them; they are weary of those hideous objects which are given them to restrain all their thoughts to their Husbands: I know all this of Them; but You, who are accomplices in these irregularities, You shall be so punished
as

as to strike a terror into all that dare abuse my confidence.

I swear by all the Prophets in Heaven, and by *Hali* the greatest of them all, that if you are negligent of your Duty, I will account your lives but as the lives of those insects which I tread under my feet.

Smirna, the 12th of the Moon
Zilcade, 1712.

LETTER XXI.

Usbek to his Friend Ibben,
at Smirna.

WE are now arrived at *Leghorn* after 40 days sail. It is a new Town, a standing mark of the great Genius of the Dukes of *Tuscany*, who of a marshy Village have made the most flourishing City in *Italy*.

The Women here enjoy very great liberties : they may see the
men

men thro' certain windows which are called *jealousies* : they may go abroad every day guarded only by an old Woman or two : they wear but one Veil* : their Brothers-in-law, their Uncles, their Nephews may visit them, and the Husband is seldom alarmed at it.

It is a strange sight to a *Mahometan* when he first takes a view of a Christian City. I do not speak of things that at first strike all beholders, such as the difference of Buildings, of Habits, of the chief Customs : there is in the least trifles something singular which I feel but cannot express.

To morrow *Rica* and I depart for *Marsellies* ; our abode there will not be long : our design is to go directly to *Paris*, which is the seat of the Empire of *Europe*. Travellers always love great Cities, which are a sort of common Coun-

* The Persian women wear four.

try for all Strangers. Farewel ; be assured I shall always love thee.

Leghorn, 12th of the Moon
Saphar, 1712.

LETTER XXII.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

WE have been this month at *Paris*, and have hardly been out of motion an hour : it is no small hurry a man must be in before he can get a lodging, find all the People he has directions to, and provide himself with all the Necessaries which he must have about him immediately.

Paris is as large as *Ispahan* : the Houses are so high that you wou'd swear they were all built for Astrologers. Thou wilt easily judge that a City built in the air and that has six or seven houses one at the top of the other, must be extremely
po-

populous, and that when all the folks are come down into the street there must be a blessed crowd and hurry.

Thou wilt hardly believe it; for this month that I have been here I have not yet seen any body walk: there is no people under the sun that get so much work out of their machine as the *French*: they run; they fly: the slow carriages of *Asia*, the regular step of our Camels, wou'd lay them to sleep. As for me, who am not used to this sport, and who often go on foot my old pace, I am sometimes made as mad as a Christian: for not to insist upon my being all splashed from head to foot, I can never forgive the punches of elbows which I receive regularly and periodically: one man that comes behind me and out-walks me, gives me a whisk half round, and another that crosses me on t'other side, twirls me again in a moment into my right place again; so that in a hundred paces I am more battered
 and

and bruised than if I had walked thirty mile.

Do not imagine I can as yet give thee any thorow description of the Manners and Customs of these *Europeans*: I have but a slight notion of them my self, having yet had but just time to Wonder.

The King of *France* is the most potent Prince in *Europe*: he has no Gold Mines like his Neighbour the King of *Spain*; but he has more Wealth than him, as he raises it out of the vanity of his Subjects, which is more inexhaustible than any Mine: he has undertaken and maintained great Wars upon no other Fund but the Sale of Titles of Honour: and by a Prodigy of humane Pride, his Troops were paid, his Places fortified and his Fleets equipped.

Besides, this Prince is a great Magician: he exercises dominion even over the minds of his Subjects: he makes them think just as he wou'd have them: If he has but
one

one million of Crowns in his Treasury, and stands in need of two, he only bids them believe that one Crown is Two, and they believe it. If he has a difficult War to support and has no Money at all, he only puts it into their heads that paper is money, and they are presently convinced that it is so: nay he often makes them believe that he cures them of all distempers by touching them, so great is the influence and power which he has over their Minds.

What I tell thee of this Prince need not surprize thee: there is another Magician stronger than him, who is master of his mind no less than he is of the minds of the others. This Magician is called the *Pope*: at one time he makes him believe that three are but one; that the bread he eats is not bread, or that the wine he drinks is not wine, and a thousand strange things of that nature.

And to keep him always in breath, and for fear he shou'd lose his faculty of Believing ; he from time to time gives him certain Articles of Faith to exercise himself upon. About two years ago he sent him a long Scroll which he called *Constitution* ; and wou'd needs oblige this Prince and all his Subjects to believe every thing therein contained, upon heavy Penalties. The Prince he prevailed upon ; he swallowed it at once, and set his Subjects an example : but some of them proved rusty, and declared they wou'd believe nothing at all of what was contained in that same Scroll : the women were the mothers of this rebellion which divides all the Court, the whole Kingdom and every Family. This Constitution forbids their Sex the reading of a Book, which all the Christians say was brought down from Heaven : properly speaking, it is their *Alcoran*. The women, provoked at the affront done to their
Sex

Sex in this order, set up their throats one and all against the *Constitution*: they got the men on their sides, who are not very zealous for any particular Privilege in this respect. And yet we must confess this *Mufti* does not reason amiss; and, by the Great *Hali*, I believe he is instructed in the Principles of our Holy Law: for since the Women are of a creation inferior to ours, and our Prophets tell us they shall not enter into Paradise, why shou'd they trouble their heads about reading a Book which was wrote only to shew the way to that place of Happiness?

I have heard some things related of this King which sound miraculous; and I doubt not but thou wilt be very backward to believe them.

They say, that while he was making war with his Neighbours, who were all in league against him, he had an infinite number of invincible enemies about him in the very

heart of his own Kingdom : they add, that he sought them out for above thirty years, and that yet notwithstanding the indefatigable pains of some Dervises who have his ear, he cou'd never find so much as one of them ; they live with him ; they are at his Court, in his Capital, in his Troops, in his Tribunals : and yet they say he will have the vexation to die without discovering them : one wou'd think they exist in general, but are no longer any thing in particular ; a Body, but no Members. Doubtless Heaven intends to punish this Prince for not having been moderate enough towards the Enemies he conquered, by raising up invisible ones against him, whose Genius and Destiny are above his own.

I shall continue to write to thee, and shall inform thee of things quite foreign from the *Persian* character and way of thinking : it is indeed the same Earth we tread upon : but the men of the Country where

I live, and those of the Country where thou art, are men of a quite different mould.

Paris, the 4th of the Moon
Rebiab 2, 1712.

LETTER XXIII.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

I Have received a Letter from thy Nephew *Rhedi*: he sends me word he is leaving *Smirna*, with design to visit *Italy*; and that the sole bent of his Voyage is to gather instruction, and thereby make himself more worthy of thee; I congratulate thee upon having a Nephew who shall in time be the comfort of thy Old Age.

Rica writes thee a long Letter; he tells me that he sends thee a full account of this Country: his lively genius catches every thing im-

mediately : as for me, who think more slowly, I can yet say little to thee about it.

Thou art the subject of our most tender conversations : we are never weary of recalling to mind the handsome reception thou gavest us at *Smirna*, and the Services thy Friendship is continually doing for us. Generous *Ibben*, mayest thou always meet with Friends as full of gratitude and fidelity as we are.

Heaven grant that I may quickly see thee again, and enjoy once more those happy days which slide away so pleasantly between two Friends ! Adieu.

Paris, the 4th of the Moon
Rebiab 2, 1712.



LET-

LETTER XXIV.

Usbek to Roxana, at the Seraglio of Ispahan.

HOW happy are you, *Roxana*, in being in the sweet Country of *Persia*, and not in these poisonous Climates, where Modesty and Virtue are unknown! How happy are You! You live in my Seraglio as in the Habitation of Innocence, safe from the Attempts of all Mankind: with pleasure you reflect that it is out of your power to go astray: never did man pollute you with his wanton looks: Your Father-in-law himself, even in the liberty of Festivals, never saw your charming mouth: you never failed to put on a Holy Covering to hide it. Happy *Roxana*! Whenever you went into the Country, you always have had Eunuchs to march before you and give death to those rash mortals that did not

fly your sight : even I my self, on whom Heaven bestowed you to make me happy, how much pains did it cost me to make my self master of that treasure which you guarded with so much constancy ! What torment was it to me in the first days of our Marriage not to see you ! What impatience, when I had seen you ! yet you wou'd not satisfy it ; nay, you enflamed it by obstinate refusals of frightened virtue : you confounded me in the number of those men whom you always hide yourself from. Do you remember that day when I lost you among your Slaves who concealed you from my strict enquiry ? Do you call to mind that other, when finding your tears of no effect, you employed your mother's authority to restrain the fury of my Love ? Do you remember, when all other helps failed you, the assistance you borrow'd from your courage ? You drew your poignard and threatened to sacrifice a husband that loved you,

you, if he continued to exact from you what you valued above your husband himself ! Two months past in this struggle between Love and Virtue : You carried your chaste scruples too far : you did not yield even when you were conquered : you defended an expiring viginity to the utmost extremity : you looked upon me as an Enemy, that had done you an injury, and not as a Husband that had been fond of you : it was above three months before you could look at me without blushing : your perpetual confusion seemed to upbraid me with the advantage I had taken ; nor was my possession quiet : you robbed me of as many of those charms and beauties as ever you cou'd ; and I was drunk with the greatest favours before I had obtained the least.

If you had been educated in this Country, you wou'd not have been under so much confusion : the women here have lost all shame : they

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appear

appear before the men with their faces uncovered, as if they challenged them to their defeat : they meet their eyes : they see them in their Mosques, their public Walks, and even in their own apartments ; the custom of being attended by Eunuchs is unknown to them : instead of that noble simplicity and lovely bashfulness which reigns among us, we here see a brutish impudence which it is impossible to accustom one self to.

Yes, *Roxana*, if you were here you wou'd be perfectly enraged with the horrid Shamelessness your Sex is fallen into : you wou'd fly the abominable place, and pant after that sweet Retirement where you find nothing but Innocence ; where you are sure of your self ; where no Danger alarms you ; in a word, where you can love me without fearing that you shall ever depart from the Love you owe me.

When you heighten the loveliness of your complexion with the
finest

finest colours ; when you perfume your whole Body with the most precious essences ; when you deck your self with your richest ornaments ; when you strive to distinguish your self above your Companions by the gracefulness of the Dance or melody of voice ; when you enter into a gentle contention with them for superiority of beauty, good humour and gayety, I cannot imagine you have any other end but to please me ; and when I see you blush modestly, when your eye looks for mine, when you insinuate your self into my heart with soft alluring words, I cannot doubt, *Roxana*, of the truth of your love.

But what shall we say of the *European* Women ? The Art they use to beautify their complexions, the ornaments they deck themselves with, the care they take of their persons, their continual desire of pleasing, are so many blemishes in their Virtue and Wrongs to their Husband.

Not,

Not, *Roxana*, that I believe they carry their immodesty so far as such conduct might make one imagine; or that they proceed to that horrible excess of debauchery dreadful to name, an absolute Violation of the Conjugal Faith: there are very few women so abandon'd as to carry their Guilt to that height: they all wear in their hearts an impression of virtue originally stamp'd upon them by their birth, which education may a little deface but never wholly obliterate: they may excuse themselves from the exterior duties which modesty requires; but when it comes to the last push, nature starts back. So when we lock you up so cautiously; when we keep you under the guard of so many slaves; when we check your desires from flying out too far: it is not that we apprehend the last infidelity from you: but it is because we know your purity cannot be too great, and that the least stain pollutes it.

I pity you, *Roxana*: your Chastity so long proved, deserved a Husband that shou'd never have left you, and that might himself have quelled those desires which your Virtue alone can now subdue.

Paris, the 7th of the Moon
Regeb, 1712.

LETTER XXV.

Usbek to Nessir, at Ispahan.

WE are now at *Paris*, the proud Rival of the City of the Sun*.

When I departed from *Smirna*, I desired my Friend *Ibben* to send thee a Box wherein were some Presents for thee: thou wilt receive this Letter by the same conveyance. Tho' at so remote a distance from him as five or six hundred Leagues, I write to him and hear from him

* *Ispahan*.

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as easily as if he were at *Ispahan* and I at *Com*. I send my Letters to *Marseilles*; from whence Ships are continually going to *Smirna*: from thence he sends those that are directed for *Persia* by the *Armenian* Caravans, which set out daily for *Ispahan*.

Rica enjoys a perfect State of health: the strength of his Constitution, his Youth and his natural Gaiety secure him against all dangers.

For my part, I am not so well; both my body and mind are dejected; I give my self up to reflections that grow every day more and more melancholly: my decaying health turns me towards my Country, and makes these Regions yet more foreign to me.

But, my dear *Nessir*, I conjure thee let not my wives be made acquainted with my condition; if they love me, I wou'd spare their Tears; and if they do not, I wou'd not add to their Boldness.

If

If my Eunuchs thought me in danger, if they cou'd any ways hope for an impunity for their base complaisance, they wou'd quickly cease to be deaf to the flattering voice of that deceitful Sex, which melts the Rocks and works upon things inanimate.

Adieu, *Nessir*. I take pleasure in giving thee proofs of my confidence.

Paris, the 5th of the Moon
Chahban, 1712.

LETTER XXVI.

Rica to * * *

I Yesterday saw a very odd thing, tho' it is done every day at *Paris*.

About Evening all the People get together to go and act a kind of Mimickry, which I heard them call a Play: the chief part of the performance is upon a scaffold, which

which they call the Stage: on both sides of it are little Nests which they call Boxes, where men and women act silent Scenes together almost like those which we have in *Persia*.

Sometimes you see an amorous Lady that looks languishing upon account of her neglected passion: then another with sparkling eyes and a passionate look perfectly devours her Lover with her regards, which he returns as ardently: all the passions are painted in their faces, and expressed with an eloquence which is the more lively for being dumb. There the Actors shew but half their bodies, and generally wear a muff out of modesty to conceal their Arms. Underneath is a great company of people standing, who laugh at those who are aloft upon the Stage, and these latter laugh at those below in their turn.

But those that take most pains are some young folks who are hired in their youth on purpose to bear

bear the fatigue : they are obliged to be every where ; they go, by passages which none but themselves are acquainted with ; they run up with amazing dexterity from story to story : they are above, below, in all the boxes ; they in a manner dive ; you lose sight of them ; in a moment, whip, there they are again : oftentimes they quit the place of the Scene and go act in another : there are others who tho' they are forced to use a small crutch, walk and go about like the rest. At last you come to some Rooms where they play a private Comedy : they begin with low Bows ; they proceed to embraces : they say the slightest acquaintance gives one man a title to squeeze another's breath out of his body : the place seems to inspire tenderness : and indeed they say the Princesses that reign there are not cruel ; and excepting two or three hours in a day in which they are stern enough, they are very tractable at all other times,

times, and the other is a kind of drunkenness which they are easily cured of.

All that I have been giving thee an account of, is transacted much after the same manner in another place called the *Opera*: the whole difference is, that in one they Sing, and Speak in the other. One of my friends carried me t'other day into the place where one of the chief Actresses was undressing: we grew so well acquainted, that next day I received the following Letter from her.

S I R,

I am the most unhappy woman upon the face of the earth. I was always the most virtuous Actress in the whole Opera: About seven or eight months ago I was in the tiring room where you saw me yesterday: as I was dressing my self for a Priestess of Diana, a young Abbé came in, and without respect to my white Habit, my Veil, or my Frontlet, robb'd

me

me of my innocence: in vain I now exaggerate the sacrifice I made to him; he only laughs at me, and answers he had to do only with a very prophane woman: mean while I am so big that I dare not come upon the Stage any more; for I have a most inconceivable delicacy in point of Honour, and will affirm that a woman who has any sense of reputation will much sooner part with her virtue than her modesty: with this delicacy of mine you may be sure the young Abbé would never have succeeded if he had not promised me marriage: a motive so honourable made me dispense with the little common formalities, and begin where I ought to have ended: but since his treachery has dishonoured me, I am resolved to live no longer at the Opera, where, between you and I, they hardly give me enough to live upon; for now that I advance in years, and go backward in beauty, my Salary, tho' still the same, seems to lessen every day. I was informed by one of your Attendants,

dants, that they infinitely esteem a good *Dancer* in your Country, and that if I were at *Isphahan*, my Fortune wou'd be made out of hand. If you wou'd grant me your protection, and carry me with you into that Country, you wou'd do a piece of service to a woman, who by her virtue and good conduct wou'd not appear unworthy your goodness. I am, &c.

Paris, 12th of the Moon
Chalval, 1712.

LETTER XXVII.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

THE Pope is the Head of the Christians: this is an old Idol, whom they worship upon prescription. He was anciently formidable even to Princes themselves; for he deposed them as easily, as our magnificent Sultans depose the Kings of *Irimetta* and *Georgia*: but

no

no body fears him now. He calls himself the Successor of one of the first Christians, named St. *Peter* : and it was certainly a very rich Succession which he left him ; for he is master of immense treasure, and has a very great country under his dominion.

The Bishops are Lawyers, who are subordinate to him, and have two very different functions under his Authority. When they are assembled together, they make Articles of Faith as well as himself : When they are separate, they have nothing to do but to give People Dispensations from obeying the Law. For thou must know, the Christian Religion is encumbered with a vast many very difficult Practices ; and as it was not thought half so easie to fulfill those Duties, as to have Bishops that shou'd give permission to let them alone ; they chose this latter course for the public benefit. So that if they do not care for keeping the *Rhamazan* ;
if

if they have no stomach for the formalities of Marriage ; if they wou'd break a Vow ; if they wou'd marry contray to the regulations of the Law ; nay, sometimes, if they have a fancy not to keep an Oath, or so, they go to the Bishop, or the Pope, who immediately grants them a Dispensation.

The Bishops do not make articles of Faith of their own mere motion : there is an infinite number of Doctors, most of them Dervises, who start a thousand new questions in Religion among themselves : they are left to dispute a long while with one another ; and the war holds till a Decision comes and puts an end to it.

And accordingly I can assure thee there never was a Kingdom that had so many Civil Wars in it as that of Christ.

Those who publish any new Proposition, are at first called Heretics. Every Heresy has its name, which is a sort of a nick-name for all concerned

cerned in it: but any of them may chuse whether they will be Heretics or no: for it is but dividing the difference, and giving those that accuse them of Heresy a distinction; and let this distinction be what it will, intelligible, or not intelligible, it makes a man as white as snow, and he may call himself Orthodox.

This that I tell you will hold good as to *France* and *Germany*; for I have heard that in *Spain* and *Italy* there is a set of Dervises that won't be jested with, but will burn a man as they wou'd burn straw. When any man falls into the hands of those folks, happy is his Lot if he has always said his Prayers with little wooden beads in his hand; or has always carried about him two pieces of Cloth tied to two Ribbons; or has ever been in a Province called *Galicia*: without these things the poor Dog is in a pitiful case: if he swears like any Turk, that he is an Orthodox Christian,

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'tis ten to one they don't agree upon the terms; but burn him for a Heretic: in vain he offers his distinction: they won't trouble their heads about distinctions: and he is Ashes before they will ever examine whether there is any thing in it or no.

Other Judges usually presume the person accused to be innocent: these always take it for granted, that he is guilty: and whenever there is any doubt in the case, they lay it down to themselves for a Rule to incline to Severity: probably this may arise from the ill opinion they have of mankind; but on the other hand, they have so good a one of them, that they never think them capable of telling a Lye; for they will receive the Evidence of mortal enemies, women of bad repute, and fellows of infamous professions. In their Sentence, they pay a small compliment to those whom they dress in a fiery shirt; they tell them they are very sorry
to

to see them in such a scurvy dress; that for their parts they are merciful and abhor blood, and are grieved at heart that they have condemned them : but to comfort themselves, poor men, they confiscate all the effects of the miserable wretches, to their own coffers.

Happy the Land which is inhabited by the Children of the Prophets : these mournful Spectacles are there unknown* : the holy Religion brought down to them by Angels, defends it self by the mere force of Truth, and has no need of these violent Methods for its support.

Paris, the 12th of the Moon
Chalval, 1712.

* *The Persians are of the most Tolerating Spirit of any of the Mahometans.*

LETTER XXVIII.

Rica to the same, at Smirna.

THE Inhabitants of *Paris* have a Spirit of Curiosity in them, that is perfectly extravagant. When I arrived here, I was stared at as if I had drop'd from Heaven : old and young, women and children, all must have a sight of me : if I went abroad, every body got to their windows : if I walk'd in the *Tuilleries*, immediately a Circle was form'd round me : the women made a Rainbow about me, varied with a thousand colours. If I went to the public Shews, presently a hundred Spying-glasses were levell'd at my strange figure : in short, never was man so much seen as I was. I sometimes smiled to hear people that had hardly ever stirred out of their chamber, whisper to one another ; It must be confessed, his Air is truly *Persian*. And, which
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is most wonderful, I found Pictures of me wherever I went. I saw my self multiplied in every Shop, upon every Chimney ; so fearful were they that they shou'd not see me enough.

Yet all these Honours are but burthensome. I did not imagine my self to be any thing so curious, or so extraordinary : and tho' I have a very good opinion of my self, I never dreamt I shou'd have disturb'd the peace of a great City where no body knew me. This made me resolve to lay aside my *Persian* habit, and put on an *European* dress, to find whether any thing so admirable wou'd remain in my countenance. This tryal brought me to a true knowledge of my self: when stript of my foreign ornaments, I saw my self prized at my true rate: I had great reason to be angry with my Tailor for making me lose, in a moment, all the public esteem and consideration : for I at once sunk into a most terrible Nothingness : I

Sometimes sat an hour together in company, without opening my mouth, or being so much as look'd at: but if any body by chance dropt a word that I was a *Persian*, in an instant there was a buz about my ears: Ha, ha! the Gentleman a *Persian*! Strange! That any body shou'd be a *Persian*!

Paris, the 6th of the Moon
Chalval, 1712.

LETTER XXIX.

Rhedi to Usbek, at Paris.

I Am now at *Venice*, my dear *Usbek*; one may have seen all the Cities in the World, and yet be surprized at the sight of *Venice*: it will always be matter of wonder to see a great Town, lofty Spires, and Mosques rising out of the Water, and to find a People without
6 number

number in a place where there ought to be nothing but Fishes.

But this profane City is destitute of the most precious Treasure in the world; I mean, fresh running Water; it is impossible here to accomplish one single ablution lawfully. It is held in abomination by our holy Prophet; and he never looks down upon it from his lofty seat in Heaven, without rage.

Were it not for this, my dear *Usbek*, I should be charmed to live in a City where my mind improves every day: I inform my self in the secrets of Trade, in the Interests of Princes, in the form of their Government: I do not neglect even the *European* Superstitions; I apply my self to Physic, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy: I study the Arts: in a word, I dispell the Clouds which darkened my sight in the Country of my Birth.

Venice, 16th of the Moon
Chalval, 1712.

LETTER XXX.

Rica to * * *

I Went t'other day to see a House where about three hundred People are maintained poorly enough: I had soon satisfied my curiosity; for neither the Church, nor the Buildings, deserve much notice. The poor folks in this house were merry enough: several of them were playing at Cards, or other Games, which I knew nothing of. As I went out, one of the men was going out too, and hearing me ask which was the way to the *Marais*, which is the furthest part of all *Paris*; I am going thither, says he, and will conduct you: follow me. He led me to my heart's content, extricated me out of all crowds, and saved me dextrously from Carts and Coaches: we were just come to the end of our journey, when being curious to know what my Guide was: My
good

good Friend, said I to him, may not I know who you are? I am a blind man, Sir, answered he. What, said I, Blind? And why did not you desire the honest man that was playing at cards with you, to be our guide? He is blind too, replied he: for these four hundred years there have been three hundred blind folks of us in that House where you found me: but I must leave you; this is the street you enquired for: I must mix with the crowd, and enter into that Church, where I dare swear I shall hinder other people more than they will me.

Paris, the 17th of the Moon
Chalval, 1712.



LETTER XXXI.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

WINE is so dear at *Paris* by means of the Duties it is charg'd with, that one wou'd think the design was to make the people obey the precept of the Divine Alcoran, which forbids the use of it.

When I meditate upon the fatal effects of that liquor, I cannot help looking upon it as the most dreadful present that ever Nature made to Man. If any thing ever stained the lives and reputations of our Monarchs, it was their intemperance: it is the most envenomed spring of all their Injustice and Cruelty. I will speak it to the shame of mankind: the Law forbids our Princes the use of wine, and they drink it to an excess that degrades them even from their humanity. On the contrary, the
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Christian Princes are allowed it, and it is never observed to lead them into any irregularities. The Mind of Man is made up of contradictions : in the licentiousness of a debauch they rebel against all Precepts with a kind of Fury ; and the Law designed to make us just often serves only to make us more criminal.

But when I disapprove the use of this liquor, which deprives man of his Reason ; I do not in like manner condemn those beverages which cheer and comfort it. It is the Wisdom of the Orientals to seek remedies against melancholly as much as against the most dangerous distempers. When any misfortune befalls an *European*, he has no other refuge but to read a Philosopher call'd *Seneca* : but the *Asiatics*, much more prudent, and in this particular better Physicians, use liquors capable of making the heart of man glad, and charming

F 5 away

away the remembrance of his afflictions.

Nothing can be more gloomy than the consolations drawn from the necessity of Evil, the ineffectualness of remedies, the irreversibleness of Fate, the Decrees of Providence, and the wretchedness of the State of Man : it is ridiculous to go about to soften the misfortune by the consideration that man is born to misery : it is much better to lift the mind out of its reflexions, and to manage the man rather as a creature endued with Sensation than with Reason.

The Soul while united with the Body is continually tyrannized over by it : if the motion of the blood is too slow ; if the spirits are not enough purified ; if they are not in sufficient quantity, we fall into dejection and sorrow : but if we take some beverage capable of altering this disposition of the Body ; our Soul again becomes capable of receiving gay impressions, and takes

a secret delight in perceiving its Machine resume fresh life and motion.

Paris, the 25th of the Moon
Zilcade, 1713.

LETTER XXXII.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

THE women of *Persia* are finer women than those of *France*; but those of *France* are prettier: it is impossible not to love the former and not to be delighted with the latter: the first have more of tenderness and modesty, the second more of gayety and sprightliness.

What makes the blood so rich and florid in *Persia* is the regular life the women lead; they neither game nor sit up a-nights; they drink no wine, and never are expos'd to the weather: I must confess,

114. Persian Letters.

fess, the Seraglio is calculated rather for health than pleasure : it is a flat, uniform, still life, without any spirit in it to quicken it ; every thing there favours of subordination and duty ; Delight itself is there grave, and Joy severe, and are hardly ever tasted otherwise than as tokens of authority and dependance.

Neither have the men in *Persia* the same gayety as the *French* have : they discover none of that freedom of mind, that satisfied air, which are here found in all degrees and conditions of Life.

It is much worse in *Turkey*. There you may find families wherein from father to son no one has laugh'd since the foundation of the monarchy.

This gravity of the *Asiatics* proceeds from the little conversation they have with each other : they never see one another, but when forc'd to it by some ceremony : Friendship, that pleasing engagement of the heart which here makes

makes up the sweetness of life, is to them almost unknown; they retire into their houses, where they always find a certain company that waits for them; so that every individual family stands, as it were, an island by it self.

Discourfing one day upon this fubject with a man of this country, fays he to me: What I think moft amifs in your manners, is your being obliged to live as you do with flaves whose minds and inclinations always have a relifh of the meanness of their condition. These rascally sort of people weaken in you the sentiments of virtue which you derive from nature, and hinder their growth from your very infancy that they beset you.

Shake but off your prejudices, and what can you expect from an education that is received from the hands of a wretch who places his whole merit in being Gaoler to another man's wives, and is proud of the vilest employment that mankind

kind is capable of? who is despicable for that very fidelity which is his only virtue; being prompted thereto by Envy, Jealousy, and Despair; who burning with desire to revenge himself of both Sexes, being the out-cast of both, is content to be tyranniz'd over by the strongest, provided that he may but afflict the weakest; who deriving from his imperfection, his ugliness, and deformity, the whole lustre of his condition, is only esteem'd because he is unworthy to be so; who, in short, rivetted for ever to the gate where his station is, harder than the very hinges and bolts that fasten it, values himself upon a fifty years exercise of that scandalous office, where taking charge of his master's jealousy, he lets loose his utmost barbarity.

*Paris, the 14th of the Moon,
Zilhage, 1713.*

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LETTER XXXIII.

Usbek to Gemchid his Cousin :
*A Dervise of the shining
 Monastery of Tauris.*

WHAT thinkest thou of the Christians, sublime Dervise? Believest thou that at the day of Judgment they shall be like the Infidel *Turks*, who shall serve the *Jews* for Asses, and shall be rid by 'em a good round trot to hell? I am well assur'd they shall not go to the abode of the Prophets; and that the Great *Haly* was not sent for their sakes. But because they have not been so happy as to find Mosques in their country, dost thou think that they will be condemn'd to eternal punishments, and that God will chastise them for not practising a Religion which he did not make known to them? I tell thee I have often examin'd these
 Chri-

118 Persian Letters.

Christians; I have questioned them, to see if they had any notion of the Great *Haly* who was the fairest of men, and I have found that they never so much as heard of him.

They do not in the least resemble those Infidels whom our holy Prophets put to the sword because they refused to believe in the miracles of Heaven: they are rather like those unhappy ones who dwelt in the thick darkness of Idolatry, before the divine Light shone forth on the countenance of our Great Prophet.

Again; if you sift narrowly into their Religion, you will find a sprinkling of our doctrines. I have often admired the secret ways of Providence, who seems thereby inclin'd to prepare them for the general conversion. I have heard talk of a book written by their Doctors, entitled *Polygamy Triumphant*; wherein it is proved that the Christians are enjoy'd Polygamy: their Baptism is an image of our legal ablutions;

lutions; and the Christians are only mistaken in the efficacy they ascribe to the first ablution, which they believe ought to suffice for all the rest: their Priests and their Monks pray as we do seven times a day: they hope to enjoy a Paradise, where they shall taste a thousand delights, by means of the Resurrection of Bodies: they have, like us, sett Fasts, mortifications with which they hope to work upon the divine Mercy: they worship good Angels, and are afraid of bad ones; they have a holy credulity for miracles, which God works by the ministry of his servants: they own, as we do, the insufficiency of their own merits, and that they stand in need of an Intercessor with God. Tho' I don't find *Mahomet* among them, I every where meet with Mahometism. Do all they can, Truth will prevail, and break thro' the cloud that surrounds her. A day will come when the Eternal will see nothing upon the Earth.

Earth but true Believers: Time, which consumes every thing, will even destroy Error it self: All Men will be astonish'd to behold themselves under the same Banner: every thing will be at end, not excepting the Law it self: the divine books will be taken up from Earth and conveyed among the Celestial Archives.

Paris, the 20th of the Moon
Zilhage, 1713.

LETTER XXXIV.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

Coffee is very much in use at *Paris*: There are multitudes of publick Houses where they distribute it. In some of these houses they talk news, in others they play at draughts: there's one of them where the Coffee is prepar'd in such a manner as to infuse wit into

into those that drink it ; at least there is not one but believes he has four times more wit when he goes out than when he came in.

But what I can't approve of, is that these Wits are of no manner of use to their Country, and do nothing but amuse their Talents upon boyish subjects : for example, when first I came to *Paris*, I found them very hot upon one of the slenderest subjects that could be imagin'd ; it was concerning the reputation of an old *Greek* Poet, the place of whose birth, as well as the time of his death, has been unknown for above two thousand years.

Both parties own'd that he was an excellent Poet : the only question was, whether he had more or less merit ascribed to him than he deserv'd. Each was for settling the Rates ; but amongst these Assizers of reputation, some made better weight than the others ; the dispute was very sharp ; they so cordially abus'd each other, and were so

so very bitter in their rallery, that I no less wonder'd at the Manner of their disputing than at the Matter of the dispute. If any one, said I to my self, were so fool-hardy in the presence of one of these defenders of the *Greek* Poets, to fall foul on the reputation of some honest Citizen, how would he be reprimanded! sure this nice zeal for the reputation of the Dead would be hot indeed for that of the Living! Be that as it will, added I, God keep me from ever bringing upon my head the enmity of the Censors of this Poet; who, tho' he has been in his grave these two thousand years, can't yet escape so implacable a hatred. They do but beat the Air now: what would they do, were they animated by the presence of an Enemy?

These I have been speaking of dispute in the vulgar tongue, and are to be distinguished from another sort of Disputants, who make use of a barbarous Language, which
seems

seems to add something to the rage and obstinacy of the Combatants. There are certain parts of the Town where this sort of people are at it, helter skelter, night and day; they feed upon Distinctions; they subsist upon Obscure Reasonings and False Consequences: This trade, which one would think would hardly find a Man in bread, does not fail to turn to account: we have seen a whole Nation, expell'd out of their own Country, cross the Seas to come and settle in *France*, bringing nothing along with them to ward off the necessities of life, but a formidable Talent for disputation. Adieu.

*Paris, the last of the Month
Zilhage, 1713.*



LETTER XXXV.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

THE King of *France* is old: we have not in our histories one example of a *Persian* Monarch that has reign'd near so long. He is said to possess to a very high degree the talent of causing himself to be obey'd: he governs with the same Genius his Family, his Court, his Kingdom: He has been often heard to say, that of all the governments in the world, that of the *Turks*, or that of our august Sultan, would please him best; so great a value does he set upon the Oriental Politicks.

I have studied his character, and have found therein contradictions which it is impossible for me to reconcile: for example, he has a Minister not above eighteen years old; and a Mistress that is turn'd of fourscore: He doats on his Religion,

ligion, and yet can't endure such as assert that it ought to be rigidly practised: Tho' he shuns the tumult of Cities, and communicates himself but little, yet is he taken up from morning till night upon means how he may give occasion to be talked of: he loves trophies and victories; but is as fearful of seeing a good General at the head of his own Troops, as he wou'd have reason to dread one at the head of his Enemies: No Prince but himself, as I find, was ever at the same time richer than a Prince cou'd wish to be; and poorer than a private person could possibly bear to be.

He loves to gratify such as serve him: but then he as liberally rewards the Assiduities, or rather the Idleness of his Courtiers, as the laborious Campaigns of his Captains: He oftentimes prefers a Man that undresses him, or gives him a napkin when he sits down to Table, before another who takes him

Towns

Towns or wins him Battles. He thinks that the Supream Grandeur ought not to be confin'd in the distribution of favours: and without examining whether the Person whom he bestows his Bounty upon, is really a Man of Merit; he thinks his choice of him makes him so: and accordingly he has been known to bestow a small pension upon a Man that fled from the Enemy two Leagues; and a fine Government upon another that fled four.

He is magnificent, principally in his Buildings: there are more Statues in the gardens of his Palace, than there are Inhabitants in a large City: His Guard is as strong as that of the Prince before whom all the thrones of the Earth truckle, and are reduced to dust: His Armies are as numerous, his Supplies as endless, and his Exchequer as inexhaustible.

*Paris, the 7th of the Moon
Maharram, 1713.*

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LETTER XXXVI.

Rica to Ibben at Smirna.

IT is a great question among Men, whether it is better to deprive Women of Liberty, or to allow it them. In my mind, there is much to be said on both sides. If the *Europeans* will have it to be ungenerous to make those unhappy whom we love; our *Asiatics* answer, that it is an argument of a poor Spirit for Men to renounce the Empire which Nature has bestow'd on them over the Women. If we are told that a great number of Women shut up are very troublesome; they answer, that ten Women that are obedient, are less troublesome than One that is not. Now if in their turn they object that the *Europeans* can't be happy with Women that are not faithful to them: their answer is, that this same Fidelity, so much boast-

ed of, does not hinder the disgust which always follows a gratified Passion; that our Women are too much ours; that so calm a Possession leaves us nothing to wish or to fear; that a little Coquetry is as it were the Salt which not only gives the relish, but prevents corruption. Perhaps a wiser Man than my self would be at a loss how to decide this question: for if the *Asiatics* do very well to look out for means to calm their Inquietudes; the *Europeans* are as much in the right, to have no Inquietudes at all.

After all, say they, though we were unhappy in quality of Husbands, we should still find means to make our selves amends, in quality of Lovers.

No Man can with reason complain of the Infidelity of his Wife, unless there were but three Persons in the World; they will be quits, so long as there are four.

There is another great Question, namely, whether by the Law of Na-

Nature the Women are subject to the Men. No certainly, said a very gallant Philosopher to me the other day, Nature never dictated any such Law: the Empire we assume over them is down-right Tyranny: which they let us exercise, only because they have more Good-nature than we, and consequently more Humanity and Reason: these very advantages, which doubtless ought to give them the Superiority had we been rational, have lost it them, because we are otherwise,

Now if it be true that the power we have over the Women, is merely tyrannical; it is no less true that they have over us an Empire natural; that of Beauty, which nothing can resist. Our Authority extends not to all Countries; whereas that of Beauty is universal: wherefore then do we claim a preheminance? Is it because we are stronger than they? but herein is a manifest Injustice; we

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employ

130 Persian *Letters*.

employ all manner of means to break their Spirits: they would be equally vigorous, were their Education equal to ours: try them in the Talents, which education has not enervated; and you will see whether they are weaker than us.

This must be confest, tho' it is contrary to our custom; amongst the most civiliz'd Nations, Women always had the authority over their Husbands: It was established by a Law among the *Egyptians*, in honour of *Isis*, and among the *Babylonians*, in honour of *Semiramis*. It is said of the *Romans*, that they commanded all Nations, but obey'd their Wives. I take no notice of the *Sarmatians*, who were really Slaves to the Sex; they were too much *Barbarians* to be quoted for an Example.

Thou seest, my dear *Ibben*, that I have imbib'd the taste of this Country, wherein they love to maintain extraordinary Opinions, and

and to reduce every thing to a Paradox. The Prophet has decided the question, and has adjusted the rights of both Sexes: the Wives ought to honour their Husbands, and the Husbands their Wives; but the former have the advantage to be one degree above the latter.

Paris, 16th of the Moon
Gemmadi 2, 1713.

LETTER XXXVII.

* Hadgi Ibbl to the Jew Ben Joshua, a Mahometan Proselyte, at Smirna.

IT seems to me, Ben Joshua, that the Birth of extraordinary Personages is always ushered in with

* Hadgi is one that has been in Pilgrimage at Mecca.

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some

some stupendous signs and appearances; as if Nature suffer'd a sort of Crisis, and the Celestial power cou'd not bring forth without the pangs of Child-birth.

Nothing is so marvellous as the Birth of *Mahomet*. God who by the decrees of his Providence had resolv'd from the very beginning to send to mankind this mighty Prophet, to chain up Satan; created a Light two thousand years before *Adam*, which passing from Elect to Elect, from one Ancestor to another Ancestor of *Mahomet*, authentick testimony of his being sprung from the Patriarchs.

It was therefore for the sake of this same Prophet, that God Willed not that any Child should be conceiv'd, till the nature of Woman should cease to be unclean; and the Virile Instrument were deliver'd up to Circumcision.

He came into the world Circumciz'd;

cumciz'd; and Joy was seen upon his Countenance at the very instant of his birth: thrice did the Earth tremble as if she her self had been in labour: all the Idols fell flat on their faces: the Thrones of Kings were overturn'd: *Lucifer* was thrown down to the bottom of the Sea, and swam therein for forty days before he emerg'd from the deep Abyss: after which he fled to mount *Cabes*, from whence with a terrible voice he call'd upon the Angels.

That very night did God set a ~~boundary-mark~~ between Man and Woman, which neither of them could pass over: the Art of the Magicians and Necromancers found it self bereft of virtue: a Voice was heard from Heaven saying these words; I have sent to the world my faithful Friend.

According to the testimony of *Isben Aben* the *Arabian* Historian, the generations of Birds, Clouds, Winds, and all the squadrons of

Angels assembled themselves to breed up this Child, and there was great contention among them who should have the honour of it. The Birds said, warbling, that they ought to have the fostering of him; because they could more easily bring together the various fruits of different climates. The Winds murmur'd and said, it rather belongs to us, because we can convey to him the most agreeable Odours from all parts. No, said the Clouds, the care of him ought to be committed to us, because we will every instant impart to him the refreshing coolness of the Waters. Upon which the Angels cry'd out, indignant: what will there remain for us to do? But a Voice was heard from Heaven, which put an end to all disputes: He shall not be taken out of the hands of Mortals; because happy the breasts that shall give him suck; the hands that shall touch him; the roof he shall dwell under,

der, and the bed he shall repose on.

After so many flagrant testimonials, my dear *Joshua*, a man must have an heart of steel not to believe his holy Law. What cou'd Heaven do more to prove his divine Mission, unless Nature it self had been overturn'd; and mankind who were to be convinc'd, had been destroy'd?

Paris, 20th of the Moon
Rhegeb, 1713.

LETTER XXXVIII.

[Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.]

AS soon as a great Man is dead, they meet here in a Mosque, and make his funeral Oration; that is, a Discourse in his praise: with which, after all, a man would be puzzled to decide exactly

G 5 whether

whether the deceas'd had a great deal of Merit, or none at all.

I would have these funeral Ostentations banish'd: men should be bewail'd at their Birth, and not at their Death. What avail the ceremonies and mournful formalities about a sick man in his last moments; his Family weeping, his Friends grieving, but only to exaggerate the loss he is going to suffer, and make him the loather to depart?

We are so blind that we know not when we are to mourn, or when we are to rejoice: we have hardly ever any thing besides fictitious Sadness, or fictitious Mirth.

When I see the *Mogul* every year foolishly put himself into a ballance, and cause himself to be weigh'd like an Ox; when I see his People rejoicing at their Prince's being grown more corpulent, that is to say less capable of governing

verning them; I can't help pitying the extravagance of the Mind of Man.

Paris, 20th of the Moon
Rhegeb, 1713.

LETTER XXXIX.

The Chief of the black Eunuchs to Usbek.

I S M A E L, one of the black Eunuchs, magnificent Lord, is just now dead, and I thought it incumbent upon me to fill up his place. Eunuchs being at present extreamly scarce, I had thoughts of making use of a black Slave which thou hast in the Country: but as yet I have not been able to prevail upon him to suffer himself to be consecrated into this employment. Considering with my self, that in the main it was for his own good, I resolv'd t'other day to use a little

tle rigour towards him ; and so, in conjunction with the Intendant of thy Gardens, I ordered him, in his own despite, to be put into a condition of rendring to thee Services with which thy Heart is most delighted, and to live as I do within these tremendous Walls, which he dares not so much as look upon. But he set up his throat as if we had been a going to skin him; and was so very mutinous, and made such resistance, that he got away from us, and escap'd the fatal knife. I have just now been inform'd, that he intends to write to thee, to ask thy Excuse; affirming that I conceiv'd this design purely to revenge my self on him, for his saying certain sharp things concerning me. I swear by the hundred thousand Prophets, that I acted upon no other motive, than the advancement of thy service, the only thing that I value, and beyond which I extend not my View, nor have Eyes for any other
ther

thier object. I prostrate my self at thy feet.

*From the Seraglio of Fatme,
7th of the Moon Mahar-
ram, 1713.*

LETTER XL.

Pharan to Usbek, his Sovereign Lord.

W^Er't thou here, magnificent Lord, I shou'd appear before thee, all paper'd over with Petitions and Representations, and all little enough to contain an account of the outrages I have suffered since thy departure, from the hands of the chief black Eunuch, the wickedest of men.

Under colour of some Ralleries, which he pretends I utter'd concerning the unhappiness of his condition, he pours upon my head the whole stock of his inexpressible Revenge 33

venge; he has inflam'd against me the cruel Intendant of thy Gardens, who since thy departure imposes on me most unsufferable tasks, under which I have a thousand times been upon the brink of expiring, yet without abating in the least of my ardour to serve thee. How many times have I said within my self; I have a Master who is all over goodness, and yet there breaths not a more unhappy Slave than I!

I confess to thee, magnificent Lord, I did not think my misery to be capable of any addition: but this cursed Eunuch was resolved to fill up the measure of his villany. Some days ago, of his own private authority, he markt me out for a keeper of thy sacred Women; that is, he destin'd me to an Execution which would be, to one in my case, a thousand times worse than death it self. Those who at their birth have been so unfortunate as to receive from their cruel Parents such treatment, have this consolation,
that

that they never knew what it was to be otherwise ; but for me to be degraded and stript of Manhood, I'm sure I shou'd dye of Grief, if I over-lived the Pain.

I embrace thy Feet, sublime Lord, in the most profound humility ; grant me to feel the effects of that Virtue which is so much respected : and let it not be said that by thy command there is in the world one unhappy man the more.

*From the Gardens at Fatme,
7th of the Moon Mahar-
ram, 1713.*

LETTER XLI.

Usbek to Pharan, at the Gardens at Fatme.

REceive joy into thy heart, and recognize these sacred Characters : make the chief Eunuch and the

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the Intendant of my Garden to kiss the same : I forbid them to lay hand on thee before I return : let them purchase an Eunuch to supply the place of him that is wanting : go on and perform thy duty, as if thou hadst Me always before thine eyes : and know, that the greater my kindness is, the more severely shalt thou be punished, if thou abusest it.

*Paris, the 25th of the Moon.
Rhegeb, 1713.*

LETTER XLII.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

THERE are in *France* three sorts of Professions, the Church, the Sword, and the Long Robe. Each has a sovereign contempt for the other two : a man, for example, that ought to be despised only for being a Fool is often despised only because he is a Lawyer.

Even

Even the vilest Mechanicks will dispute for the excellency of the Trade they have chosen: each sets himself above him that is of a different Profession; in proportion to the Idea which he has fram'd to himself of the Superiority of his own.

All men, more or less, resemble that woman of the province of *Erivan*, who having received some favour from one of our Monarchs, wish'd a thousand times, in her Benedictions of him, that Heaven would make him Governor of *Erivan*.

I have read, that a *French Ship* putting in upon the coast of *Guinea*, some of the Crew went ashore to buy Sheep. The Natives carry'd them to the King, who was dispensing justice to his Subjects under a Tree. He was on his Throne, that is to say, a piece of Timber, as statefully as if he had sat upon that of the great Mogul: about him stood three or four Guards arm'd with hedge-stakes: an Umbrella in the form of

of a Canopy skreen'd him from the heat of the Sun. All his own ornaments, as well as those of the Queen his wife, consisted in their black Hides, and some few Rings. This Prince, whose vanity was greater than his poverty, askt those Strangers, whether he was not much talkt of in *France*: he fancy'd his name could not but be carried from one Pole to another: and being quite the reverse of that Conqueror, of whom it is said, he had silenced the whole earth, this Prince fancied it could not be but the whole Universe must speak of him.

When the Cham of *Tartary* has dined, a Herald proclaims, that all the Princes of the Earth may go to dinner, if they think fit: and this Barbarian, that lives upon milk, who has neither house nor home, and subsists upon nothing but robbing and cutting of throats, looks upon all the Kings of the world as
his

his Slaves, and regularly insults over them twice a day.

Paris, *the 28th of the Moon*
Rhegeb, 1713.

LETTER XLIII.

Rhedi to Usbek, at * * *

Y Eſterday morning, as I was in bed, I heard a violent knocking at the door; which was ſoon opened with whom I had contracted ſome acquaintance, and who ſeem'd to me to be quite out of his wits: his Apparel was a great deal more than modeſt: his Peruke, all awry, had not been ſo much as comb'd out; he had not had leiſure to get his black Waitcoat mended; and for that day he had laid aſide the wiſe precautions with which he was wont to diſguiſe the dilapidations of his Equipage.

Get

Get up, says he to me, I shall have occasion for you all this day; I have a thousand Implements to buy, and would be glad to have you with me: first, we must go to the Street St. *Honore*, to speak to a Scrivener who has a commission to sell an Estate to the value of five hundred thousand Livres, and I am willing to have the refusal of it. As I came hither, I stopt a moment in the suburbs of St. *Germain*, where I hired a House for two thousand Crowns, and hope to get day.

As soon as I was drest, or pretty near the matter, my Chap hastily hugs me down with him: First, let us go and buy a Coach, and settle our Equipage: accordingly we bought not only a Coach, but variety of Merchandize, to the value of one hundred thousand Livres, in less than an hour's time: all this was soon over, for he did not stand hagling, nor counted out a farthing of

of money, so that he lost no time. I began to muse upon this; and when I had examin'd into him a little, I found in him an odd complication of riches and poverty, so that I knew not what to think: but at length I broke silence, and taking him a little aside, Sir, says I to him, who is to pay for all this? my self, says he: come along with me into my chamber, and I will show you immense Treasures and Riches, enough to raise the envy of the greatest Monarchs, but not your envy, for you shall share them with me. I follow him: we clamber up to his fifth story, and then by a ladder we ascend to the sixth, which was a closet open to the four winds: in this closet I saw nothing but two or three dozen of earthen Basons, fill'd with divers Liquors. I rose betimes, says he; and the first thing I did, according to my custom this five and twenty years, I visited my Work; and found that the great day was at last come,
that

that was to make me the richest man upon the earth. See you this red liquor here? It now has all the qualities required by the Philosophers towards the Transmutation of metals: I have extracted from it these grains you see here: they are true gold with respect to their colour, tho' somewhat imperfect as to their weight. This secret, which *Nicholas Flamel* found out, but which *Raymond Lully* and millions besides have mist, is fallen into my hands; and I am this day a happy Adept. God grant I make such use of the treasure he has been pleased to communicate to me, as may be for his Glory!

I turn'd about, and went, or rather fell down the ladder, transported with rage, and left this rich man in his rage, and left this rich man in his hospital. Adieu, my dear *Usbek*; I will come and see thee tomorrow, and if thou art inclined we will return together to *Paris*.

Paris, the last of the Moon

Rhegeb, 1713.

LET-

LETTER XLIV.

Usbek *to* Rhedi, *at* Venice.

I Meet here with People that dispute without end about Religion; but, in my mind, the contention is, who shall least follow the Precepts of it.

They are not only better Christians, but better Citizens; and this is what affects me very much: for whatever religion a man lives under, the observation of the Laws, love of our Neighbour, duty to our Parents, are the chief Acts of Religion.

And indeed, what is the first object of a religious man, but to please the Deity who established that religion he makes profession of? But the surest way to do this, is doubtless to observe the rules of Society, and the duties of Humanity: for in whatever religion a man lives, the moment that any religion at all is
sup-

suppos'd, it must also necessarily be suppos'd that God loves men, because he establishes a religion to make them happy: that if he loves men, we are sure to please him by loving them too; that is, by practising towards them all the duties of charity and humanity, and not violating the Laws under which they live.

We are much surer to please God this way, than by observing such or such a Ceremony. For Ceremonies have no degree of goodness in themselves; they are only relatively good, and in the supposition that God has enjoyn'd them: but this is a very nice point: we may easily deceive our selves; for we must make choice of those of one religion, among those of two thousand.

A certain man every day made this Prayer to God. 'Lord, I understand nothing of these disputes that are continually had, concerning thee: I am willing to serve thee according to Thy will; but every
'man

' man whom I consult, will have me
 ' serve thee according to His. When
 ' I am about to apply my self to thee
 ' in prayer, I know not what lan-
 ' guage to make use of, nor what po-
 ' sture to put my self in: one bids
 ' me pray standing, another says I
 ' must do it sitting, and a third will
 ' have me perform it kneeling. This
 ' is not all; there are, who pre-
 ' tend I ought to wash me every
 ' morning with cold water; others
 ' assert that thou wilt look upon me
 ' with abhorrence, if I cut not off
 ' a small piece of my flesh. I hap-
 ' pen'd the other day to eat a Rab-
 ' bet in a Carravansary (an Inn:)
 ' three men that were there put
 ' me into a terrible fright, by tel-
 ' ling me that I had most grievously
 ' offended thee; one, * because it
 ' was an unclean creature; another,
 ' † because it had been strangled;
 ' and the last, ‡ because it was not

* A Jew. † A Turk. ‡ An Armenian.

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‘ Fish. A Brachman who was going
 ‘ by, and whom I appeal’d to, says
 ‘ to me, they are all in the wrong,
 ‘ for to be sure you did not kill the
 ‘ creature with your own hands : But
 ‘ I did, says I. Ah ! then you have
 ‘ been guilty of an abominable acti-
 ‘ on, and God will never pardon you,
 ‘ says he to me, with a severe Voice :
 ‘ how do you know but that your
 ‘ Father’s Soul was passed into that
 ‘ creature ? All these things, Lord,
 ‘ give me an unconceivable distur-
 ‘ bance of mind : I can’t move my
 ‘ head but am threatned with having
 ‘ provoked thee to wrath, and yet
 ‘ all this while I desire to please thee,
 ‘ and in so doing to employ that life
 ‘ I owe unto thee : I know not whe-
 ‘ ther I err; but I can’t help believing
 ‘ that the best way to do this is to
 ‘ live like a good Citizen in the Soci-
 ‘ ty wherein thou hast placed me; and
 ‘ like a good Father in the Family
 ‘ which thou hast given me.

Paris, 8th of the Moon
 Chahban, 1713.

L E T.

LETTER XLV.

Zachi to Uſbek, at Paris.

I Have a great piece of News to tell thee: I am reconciled to *Zephis*: the Seraglio that was divided into parties is now united again; there is nothing but thee wanting within theſe walls, wherein Peace dwells: come my dear *Uſbek*, come, and let Love triumph therein.

I entertain'd *Zephis* at a banquet, to which thy Mother, thy Wives, and principal Concubines were invited: thy Aunts, and many of thy She-Couſins were there likewiſe: they came on horſeback, cover'd with the duſky ſhade of their Veils and of their Apparel.

Next day we ſet out for the Country, where we hoped to be more at Liberty: we mounted our Camels, and went four and four in a neſt. It being a match made of a ſudden, we had not time to ſend

H 2

about

about the Neighbourhood to acquaint them with it, that they might keep themselves within doors: but the chief Eunuch, whose thoughts are always at work, took another precaution; for, besides the Cloth which hinder'd us from being seen, he added so thick a Curtain that it hinder'd us from seeing any body.

When we came to cross the river, each of us according to custom boxt our selves up, and was convey'd into the boat: for we were told the river was full of people. One more curious than ordinary coming too near us receiv'd a mortal wound, which for ever depriv'd him of the light of the day. Another, that was bathing stark naked on the shore met with the like fate. And thus were these two unfortunate wretches sacrific'd to thy honour and ours, by the hands of thy faithful Eunuchs.

But mind what happened to us afterwards. We were hardly got to the middle of the River, when so
boi-

boisterous a wind arose, and so frightful a cloud covered the Sky, that the Mariners began to be in a consternation. Frighted at this danger, we almost all of us swooned away. I remember I heard the voice and disputes of our Eunuchs: some of whom were for letting us know our danger; and for setting us at liberty: But the head of them declared he wou'd rather die than suffer his master to be thus dishonoured, and that he would stab him that should presume to make such a bold proposal. One of my the Slaves, quite beside her self, came running to my assistance and all undrest: but a black Eunuch laid hold on her roughly, and sent her back to the place from whence she came. Then I swooned away, and recovered not my senses 'till the danger was over.

Women that go abroad, especially on the water, have a hard time on't! Men are exposed to no dangers but what threaten their

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lives; but we are every instant in danger of losing our lives, or our virtue. Adieu, my dear *Usbek*. I shall for ever adore thee.

*From the Seraglio at Fatme, the 2d of
the Moon Rhamazan, 1713.*

LETTER XLVI.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

THEY who love to improve in knowledge are never idle: tho' I have no important affair upon my hands, yet am I continually employ'd. I pass my life away in observation: I every evening commit to writing my remarks on what I have seen, and on what I have heard, in the day time: every thing engages me, every thing surprizes me: I am like a child whose tender organs receive strong impressions from the least objects.

You will hardly believe me
when

when I tell you we are welcome to all Companies and all Societies; I believe it is much owing to *Rica's* lively wit and natural gayety, which makes him court all company, and be equally courted by all: Our Outlandish Air is now no longer offensive to any body; nay we enjoy the surprize they are in, to see us so polite: for the *French* imagine not that our Climate can produce such Men as we are: And yet it must be own'd, they are well worth the undeceiving.

I have spent some days at a Country seat near *Paris*, with a man of note, who is overjoy'd when his house is full of company; His Wife is a very lovely person, and besides an unfeigned modesty, she has a sprightliness which our Ladies of *Persia* know nothing of, by reason of their recluse lives.

Being a Stranger, the best thing I could do was, according to custom, to make my remarks upon

H 4

that

that crowd of people that are incessantly flocking together, whose characters still presented me with something new : at first I took notice of a man whose simplicity pleas'd me much ; I struck up with him and he as readily join'd company with me, so that we were almost inseparable.

One day as we were discoursing together in private, tho' we were then in the midst of a great circle, yet leaving the general talkers to themselves, Perhaps you will think me more curious than well bred, says I ; but pray give me leave to ask you some questions, for I am quite weary of being thus thrown out of all play, and conversing with people I can make nothing of : my mind has been above two days at work, and there is not a single man here that has not put me to the torture above two hundred times over ; and yet in a thousand years I should never be able to make a right guess at them ; they are as invisible as the
Wives

Wives of our grand Monarch. Tell me but what you would be at, replies he to me, and I will inform you in whatever you desire to know; and the rather because I take you to be a discreet man, and one that will not abuse my Confidence.

Who is that person, said I to him, that talks so much of his entertaining the Great ones, and is so familiar with your Dukes, and speaks so often to your Ministers, who are said to be difficult to come at? He must needs be a man of Quality, but his aspect is so mean that he don't do much honour to men of Quality: and besides, I don't find he has any manner of education. I am a foreigner, but I can't help thinking there is in general a certain politeness common to all nations: I see nothing of this in him: are your men of Quality here worse educated than others? This man is a farmer of the King's Revenues, answered he smiling: he is as much above others in riches, as he is be-

low all the world in birth : He would have the best Table at *Paris*, could he but prevail with himself never to dine at home : he has a great deal of Impertinence, as you see ; but then he excels in a Cook, for which he is not ungrateful, for you have heard him all this day do nothing but commend his Cook.

And who is that huge fellow there in black, says I to him, that the Lady has placed next to herself ? How comes he to dress so dismally, and yet put on so gay a behaviour and look so florid ? He returns a gracious smile to every thing that is said to him ; his apparel is more modest, but yet more formal, than that of your women. He is a Preacher, says he ; and, which is yet worse, a Director of Consciences : for all he looks so, he knows more than the Husbands do : he knows the blind sides of the wives, who likewise know that he too is not without his blind side. How!

says

says I : he's always a talking of something, which he calls Grace. Not always, replied he ; when he whispers a pretty woman, he dwells more upon the topick of Man's fall : in publick he thunders ; but in a corner is as gentle as a lamb. Methinks, says I to him, that he is mightily taken notice of, and is respected in a more than ordinary manner : How comes he to be so distinguished ? He is a necessary Man ; he is the sweetner of a retired life ; petty Counsels, officious Cares, set Visits ; he dissipates a pain in the head better than any man alive ; he is a most excellent man.

But if am not too troublesome to you, pray tell me who is he that sits right against us so poorly habited, that makes so many ugly faces, speaks a different language from the rest, and has not the wit to talk, but talks to get wit ? He is a Poet, answers he, and a grotesque of a man. This sort of people
say

say they are born what they are ; it is very true ; and what they are born they will continue all their lives, that is to say, the most ridiculous of men, for the most part: accordingly no body spares them : contempt is liberally pour'd on them from all hands : hunger has brought this man hither ; and he is well received both by the master and mistress, whose good-nature and good breeding makes no distinction of persons : he made their *Epithalamium* when they were married ; and it is the best thing he ever did : for it happens to be as fortunate a match as he foretold it wou'd be.

You will hardly believe it, added he, you are so prepossess'd with your Oriental Customs ; there are such things amongst us as happy marriages, and women whose Virtue alone is their sufficient guard. The Couple here before us enjoy a reciprocal Peace that can't be disturb'd ; they are beloved

ved and esteemed by every body; there is but one thing amiss; their natural good humour makes them give a free admision to all sorts of people, which sometimes is the cause why there is very bad company: not as I disapprove of such: we must live with people as we find them, it oftentimes happens that such as are said to be good company are only more refin'd in Vice; as it is with poisons, the more subtile, the more dangerous.

Who is that old man, said I to him softly, that looks so morose? I took him at first for a foreigner; for besides his being differently drest from the others, he censures every thing that is done in *France*, and is displeased with your publick management. He is an old Warriour, says he, that makes himself memorable to all his Auditors by the prolixity of his atchievements; he won't allow that *France* ever gain'd a Battel in which he was not present; or that any Siege
is

is worth talking of, where he did not mount the trenches : he fancies himself so necessary to our History, that he believes it was at an end with the last action he was concerned in : he looks upon some wounds he received, as he would upon the dissolution of the Monarchy : and quite contrary to those philosophers, who say that the present time alone is enjoy'd, and that the past is nothing ; he for his part only enjoys the past, and exists not but in the Campaigns that are over : he breathes in the times that are elaps'd, in like manner as Heroes are to live in those that are to come. But wherefore, says I, did he quit the service ? He did not quit it, answers he, but the service quitted him ; he is employed in a small garrison, where he will be narrative the rest of his days : but he will never advance further ; the path of Honour is shut up against him. Why so ? said I. We have a maxim in
France,

France, reply'd he, never to raise Officers whose patience has languished in subaltern offices; we look upon them as men whose spirit is contracted into a narrowness of particulars; and who being habituated to little things, are become incapable of greater: we are of opinion, that a man who at thirty years of age has not the qualities of a General, will never have them: that he who has not that roll of his eye as to represent at once a tract of thirty leagues in all its different situations; that presence of mind that enables him in a victory to improve all advantages; and in a defeat suggests all proper resources; will never acquire those talents as long as he lives: and therefore we have among us bright employments for great and sublime men, on whom Heaven has not only bestow'd the heart but the genius of a Hero; an inferior post for such whose talents are inferior. Of this number are those

those who are grown old in an obscure warfare; they at most succeed only in doing that which they have done all their lives long; and we ought not to begin to load them extraordinarily at a time when they begin to grow weak.

A moment afterwards the spirit of curiosity seized me again, and I said to him; I give you my word I will ask you no farther questions, if you will bear with one more: Who is that young man in his own hair, who has so little wit and so very much impertinence? What makes him talk so much louder than the rest, and seem to be glad he is alive? He is a Favourite of Fortune, says he to me. Here some people came in, others went out; all got up; somebody came to speak to my Gentleman, and I remain'd as wise as I was before. But a moment afterwards this young man chanced to be close by me. It is fine weather, directing his speech to me, shall we take a
turn.

turn in the garden? I answered him in the civillest manner I could; and so we went out together. I come into the country, says he, to gratify the Mistress of the house here, with whom I am upon no ill terms: there are some women in the world that are termagant or so; but what should a man do? I visit the handsomest women in *Paris*; but I don't confine my self to one; and I often give them the slip; for between you and me I am a sad Dog. Then, says I to him, Sir, you have some post or employment that hinders you from a closer attendance upon them. No, Sir, I have nothing in the world to do, but to make a husband run mad, or drive a father to despair: I love to alarm a woman that thinks she has me fast, and reduce her within a finger's breadth of losing me: there is a parcel of us young fellows who divide thus the whole Town among us, and make it take notice of every step we take.

take. By what I find, says I to him, you make more noise than the most valiant Warriour ; and are more regarded than the greatest Magistrate. Were you in *Persia*, you wou'd not enjoy all these advantages ; you wou'd be fitter to guard our women than to pleasure them. Here I began to redden ; and I believe, had I gone on a little further, I shou'd have affronted him.

What sayest thou of a Country where such people as these are tolerated ; and a man who follows so vile a trade is suffered to live ? wherein infidelity, treachery, rapes and injustice are the steps that lead to eminence ? where a man shall be valued because he deprives a father of his daughter, a husband of his wife, and brings distraction into the happiest and most sacred societies ?

Happy the children of *Haly*, who defend their families from infamy and debauchery : the light of the

the Sun is not purer than the fire that burns in the heart of our women : our daughters think not without trembling of the day that is to deprive them of that virtue which makes them ſo like Angels and Incorporeal powers.

O my dear native ſoil, whom the riſing Sun honours with his firſt regards ; thou art not ſullied with thoſe horrible crimes which oblige that Planet to hide himſelf as ſoon as he appears in the gloomy Weſt.

Paris, the 5th of the Moon
Rhamazan, 1713.

LETTER XLVII.

Rica to Uſbek, at * * *

TOther day being in my Chamber, in came a Dervife very oddly dreſs'd : his Beard reached down quite to his hempen Girdle ;

dle; he was bare-footed; his habit was grey, coarse, and in some parts knotted: the whole figure of the man was so whimsical, that my first thought was to send for a Painter to take a sketch of him.

He accosted me with a long compliment, wherein he gave me to understand that he was a man of merit, and moreover a Capuchin: I have been informed, Sir, added he, that you are shortly to return to the Court of *Persia*, where you hold a very eminent rank: I come to beg your protection, and to desire you to obtain us from your King a little habitation near *Cashin* for two or three Monks. My good Father, said I, you design then to go to *Persia*! I, Sir, cried he! no marry; I am provincial here, and wou'd not change my condition with any Capuchin in the Universe. Why what the deuce do you want of me then? Why, answered he, if we had such a little habitation, our Fathers of *Italy* wou'd

wou'd send two or three of their Monks thither. I suppose then you are acquainted with those Monks, said I. No, Sir, I know nothing of them. Why what a plague then will their going into *Persia* be to you? A wond'rous fine project truly, to have a brace of Capuchins breathe the air of *Casbin*: it will be of general use both to *Europe* and *Asia*, no doubt; it is mighty necessary our Monarchs shou'd look after this affair. These are noble Colonies indeed! Get you gone; you and the rest of you are not cut out for transplantation; you will do much better to continue to creep about just where you were first ingendered.

Paris, the 15th of the Moon
Rhamazan, 1713.



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LETTER XLVIII.

Rica to * * *

I Have known some people whose Virtue was so natural to them that they were hardly sensible of it: they adhered to their duty without any force upon themselves, and followed it as it were by instinct: far from exalting their rare qualities in their discourse, they seemed not to have yet reached their own knowledge. These are the men I love; not those virtuous folks that seem to be amazed at their being so, and look upon a good action as a prodigy, which must fill every body with wonder that hears of it.

If Modesty be a necessary virtue even in those whom Heaven has indued with the greatest talents; what shall we say of those Insects that dare to own a Pride wou'd dishonour the greatest men?

I

I meet every where with people that are eternally talking of themselves : their conversation is a looking-glass that always presents you with their impertinent figure : they will hold you a discourse about the least accidents that ever befell them, and think their being concerned in them must make them considerable to you : there is nothing but what they have done, seen, said, or thought : they are the universal model ; an inexhaustible subject of comparison ; a spring of examples never to be dried up. How wretchedly insipid is praise, when it bounds back to the place it comes from !

Some days ago a man of this character plagued us for two hours together with his Merit and his great Talents : but as there is no perpetual motion in the world, he at last was silent. A little of the talk then fell to our share, and we took hold of the opportunity.

One

One that seemed to be a little troubled with the Spleen, began to complain of the many tiresome disturbers of conversation: What, nothing but Fools that are eternally giving you their own characters, and bringing every thing home to themselves! Your observation is just, cried our talker abruptly: ah! if men wou'd but act like me; I never praise my self: I have wealth and birth; I spend handsomely; my friends tell me I do not want wit: but you never hear me talk of these things: if I have any good qualities, that which I value my self most upon is my Modesty.

I cou'd not but wonder at this impertinent Creature; and while he was running on, I said to my self: Happy the man who has Vanity enough never to speak well of himself; who stands in awe of his hearers, and will not venture to set up his Merit against
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the Pride and Self-love of other people.

Paris, the 20th of the Moon
Rhamazan, 1713.

LETTER XLIX.

Nargum, *Envoy from Persia
in Muscovy, to Usbek at
Paris.*

THEY write me word from *Ispahan*, that thou hast left *Persia*, and art now actually at *Paris*. Why must I owe my information to any but thy self?

The commands of the King of Kings have detained me five years in this Country; where I have effected divers important Negotiations.

Thou knowest the Czar is the only Christian Prince whose Interests are mingled with those of

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Persia, because he is an Enemy to the *Turks* as well as we.

His Empire is greater than ours : for they reckon it two thousand leagues from *Moscow* to the utmost limits of his Dominions on the side of *China*.

He is absolute Master of the Lives and Fortunes of his Subjects, who are all Slaves, except four Families : and the Lieutenant of the Prophets, the King of Kings, who has Heaven for his footstool, does not make a more dreadful use of his Power.

To look at the frightful Climate of *Muscovy*, a man wou'd never dream that it thou'd be a punishment to be banished from it ; and yet whenever any Great Man is disgraced he is sent into *Siberia*.

As the Law of our Prophet forbids us to drink Wine ; the Prince's Decree prohibits the use of it from the *Muscovites*.

They have a way of receiving their Guests which has nothing at all

all of *Persian* in it. As soon as a Stranger enters their house, the husband presents him his wife; the stranger kisses her, and this is reckoned a compliment to the husband.

Tho' the Fathers in the Marriage Contract of their Daughters generally stipulate that their Husband shall not whip them; yet you cannot think how much the *Muscovite* women love to be beaten: they cannot be made to believe that they have their husband's heart, if he does not bang their bones for them: an opposite conduct in him is an unpardonable sign of indifference. Here is a Letter which one of them lately wrote to her Mother.

My dear Mother,

I am the most unfortunate of women: I have omitted nothing to gain my husband's affection; but cannot do it. Yesterday I had a thousand things to do about the House: I went

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abroad,

abroad, and staid out all the live-long day : I thought at my return he wou'd have beat me paraly ; and he did not so much as give me an angry word. My Sister has far different treatment : her husband rib-roasts her daily : she cannot look at a man, but he is presently about her bones : they love one another sincerely, and live the most comfortable life in the world.

This it is that makes her so vain : but she shall not despise me long : I am resolved I will make my husband love me, cost what it will : I will provoke him to such a degree, that sure he must give me some proofs of his kindness : it shall never be said that I cou'd never get one beating, and that I live in the house unmind-ed : upon the least slap he gives me I will squawl out as loud as ever I can bawl, that people may believe things go right ; and I fancy if any neighbour shou'd come to my help, I shou'd tear his eyes out. I beg, my dear Mother, you wou'd represent to
my

my Husband that he uses me very unworthily. My Father, good man, did not do thus: and I remember when I was a little Girl I thought sometimes he loved you a little too passionately. I embrace you, my dear Mother.

The Muscovites must not go out of the Kingdom, even to travel: so that being separated from all other Nations by the Laws of the Country, they have preserved their ancient Customs with so much the more constancy, as they do not think it possible there should be any other.

But the Prince now reigning was resolved to alter every thing: he had a sad conflict with them about their Beards: the Clergy and Monks were no less zealous to preserve their Ignorance.

He applies himself to make the Arts flourish among them, and neglects nothing to fill Europe and Asia with the Glory of his Nation, which 'till lately has been for-

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got, and was hardly known to any but it self.

Restless and busie, he travels about his vast Dominions every where, leaving behind him tokens of his natural Severity.

He makes excursions even beyond them, as if they were not sufficient to contain him, and seeks in *Europe* other Provinces and new Kingdoms.

I embrace thee, my dear *Usbek*: let me hear from thee, I conjure thee.

Moscow, 2d of the Moon
Chalval, 1713.

LETTER L.

Rica to *Usbek*, at * * *

I Was t'other day in a Company where I diverted my self well enough. There were Women of all Ages: one of fourscore; one of sixty;

sixty; one of forty, who had a Neice that might be about one or two and twenty. A sort of Instinct made me get near this last: She whispered me in my ear: What do you say to my Aunt, who at her years tries to make conquests, and wou'd be thought pretty? She is much in the wrong, said I; that's a design only proper for you. A moment afterwards, I happened to be by her Aunt, who says to me: What do you think of that Woman there, who is at least threescore, and yet spent above an hour this morning at her Toilet? 'Twas all time lost, says I, and not to be excused in any but a Woman of your beauty. I went to the miserable creature of threescore, and pitied her in my heart, when she whisper'd me: Can any thing be so ridiculous? Look there at that woman who is fourscore years old, and yet wears flame colour-ribbands: She would fain seem young, and real-

ly she is so; for this is mere Childhood. Heavens, said I to my self! Shall we never have eyes but for the ridicule of other folks? Perhaps it is a blessing, said I afterwards, that we can gather comfort from the weaknesses of others. However, being in a vein to be merry, Come, says I, we have ascended far enough; let us now go downward, and begin with the Ancient Gentlewoman that is at top. Madam, the Lady I just now spoke with, and you, are so very like, that one wou'd swear you were two Sisters: I fancy you are just of an Age. Aye marry, Sir, quoth she, when one dies, the other will quake with fear. I do not think there is two days difference between us. Having done with my decrepit Dame, I went to her of Sixty. Madam, says I, you must decide a wager I am concern'd in: I have betted, that that Lady and you (shewing her the woman of Forty) are of the

the same age; Good faith, says she, I don't believe there is six months difference. So far, good. Proceed. I still go downwards, and came next to the woman of Forty. Madam, do me the favour to tell me whether it is not in jest that you call the young Lady there at t'other Table, your Neice? You are as young as she is: nay, she has something of a decay in her face, that is not to be found in yours; and the lively colour of your cheeks——No, hold, says she, I am her Aunt, that's true: but her Mother was at least five and twenty years older than my self; we were not by the same venter: I have heard my late Sister say, that her Daughter and I were both born in a year. I thought as much, Madam; and might well wonder.

My dear *Usbek*, the women when they find themselves dying beforehand by the departure of their Charms, would fain steal backwards towards Youth. Why

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shou'd

shou'd we be surprized at their endeavouring to cheat others? They do all they can to cheat themselves, and drive out the most afflicting of all thoughts.

Paris, the 3d of the Moon
Chalval, 1713.

LETTER LI.

Zelis to Usbek, at Paris.

NEver was passion more violent than that of *Cofrou* the white Eunuch, for my Slave *Zelide*: he demands her in marriage with so much fury that I cannot refuse him. And why shou'd I oppose it, when her mother does not, and *Zelide* herself seems content with the notion of this mock marriage, this vain shadow that is offered her?

What will she do with this poor Wretch who will have nothing of the Husband, but his Jealousie;
who

who will never be warm'd out of his coldness into any thing but a useless despair; who will be continually recalling the memory of what he once was, to put her in mind of what he now is not; who always ready to enjoy, and never enjoying, will be eternally cheating her; and remind her incessantly of the wretchedness of her condition?

Heavens, to be always in visions and fancies! To live to nothing but imagination! To be always on the verge of pleasure, and never taste it! Languishing in the arms of a Wretch, instead of answering to his Sighs, to answer only to his Bewailings?

What a contempt must one have for a man of this sort, made only to guard, and never to possess? I want Love, but can find none.

I speak to thee freely, knowing thou lovest my plain way, and preferrest my open confessions, and
relish

relish for pleasure, to the feigned modesty of my Companions.

I have heard thee say a thousand times, that the Eunuchs taste a sort of pleasure with women, which is unknown to us; that Nature makes up their losses to them; that she has expedients which repair the disadvantage of their Circumstances; that they may indeed lose their Manhood, but not their Sensation, and that in this state they have a kind of third sense, whereby they only change one delight for another.

If this be so, I shall think *Zelide* less unhappy: it is some comfort to live with people less miserable.

Send me thy orders in this matter, and let me know whether thou wou'dst have this marriage compleated in the Seraglio. Adieu.

*From the Seraglio of Ispahan, 5th of
the Moon, Chabval, 1713.*

L E T

LETTER LII.

Rica to Usbek, at * * *

I Was this morning in my Chamber, which thou knowest is separated from the next only by a very thin partition, so that you may hear every thing that is said in the adjoining Room. A man that was walking about in a great passion, said to another: I can't imagine what's the matter; but every thing goes ill with me: here 'tis above three days since I have said any thing that has been to my honour, and I have been confounded among the herd in every conversation without having the least notice taken of me, or being twice spoken to. I had got ready some flights to enliven my discourse; but they wou'd not give me time to bring them in: I had a very clever story to tell, but every time I strove to bring the discourse to it, they gave

gave me the slip, as if I had made it on purpose: I have some rare Jest, that for these four days have lain in my head till they are almost grown stale, and I have not once had an opportunity of making the least use of them: if things go on at this rate, I fancy at last I shall grow a Fool: my Stars seem resolv'd to have it so. Yesterday, I was in great hopes of shining among three or four old women, who certainly had no design to play tricks with me; and I had got some of the prettiest things in the world to say. I was above a quarter of an hour striving to turn the conversation, as I wou'd have had it; but they never kept to any connection in their talk, but like the fatal Sisters always cut off the thred of my discourse. Faith, the reputation of Wit is no small trouble to support: I can't think how you managed matters to attain it.

A thought comes into my head, cries t' other: let us labour jointly

to promote each other's wit; let us go partners: we will tell one another every day beforehand what to say, and stand by each other so stoutly, that if any body offers to interrupt us in the midst of our ideas, we will drag him into us; and if he resists, we will use violence: we will agree what passages to approve, where to smile, when to laugh outright: you shall see we will give the turn to all conversations, and all the world shall admire the quickness of our wit, and the briskness of our Repartees: we will protect one another upon a nod: you shall shine to-day; to-morrow you shall be my Second: I will go with you into a House, and cry out even as I go up stairs, I must tell you a very pleasant answer this Gentleman just now made to one that we met in the street; and then turning to you, he did not expect any thing like it: you silenc'd him fairly. I will repeat some of my verses,
and

and you shall say: I was by, when he made them; it was at a supper, and he did not study for them a moment. Nay, you and I will often rally one another; and people will say, See how smartly they battle it; how briskly they defend themselves; they don't spare one another, faith; let's hear how he will come off of that; to a miracle! what presence of mind he is master of? This is a tight Engagement; but they will never dream, that we fought it all over the night before. We must buy some Jest Books, wrote for the use of those who have no wit at all, but wou'd seem to have a great deal; all depends upon copying after good originals. Pll warrant you in six months time, we hold a conversation of an hour long, made up of nothing but Jest: but we must take care of one thing; which is, to push the success of them as far as it will go; it is not enough to say a good thing: it ought

ought to be published; it shou'd be spread about every where: without this, it is but thrown away: and I own nothing in the world is such a mortification to a man, as to have a smart thing which he has said, die and be buried in oblivion in the ear of a Fool. 'Tis true, we often have amends made us for this, by having a good deal of nonsense, that we say, pass unexamined; and this is all the comfort we have in those cases. This, my dear, is the method we must take: follow my directions, and in six months you shall get a place in the Academy: you see your trouble will be but short; for when once you are a member of that, you may throw away all your arts: you will then be reckoned a Wit in spite of your teeth. It is observed that when a man enters himself of any Society, he presently catches what we may call the Spirit of the Body; you will find it so; and I am in no pain
for

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for you, but how you will bear the heaps of Applause that will be shower'd upon you.

Paris, the 6th of the Moon
Zilcade, 1714.

L E T T E R LIII.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

Among the *Europeans*, the first hour of marriage removes all difficulties; the last favours are always of the same date with the nuptial benediction: the women do not act like ours in *Persia*, who dispute the ground sometimes for whole months together: they are as free as ever they can: if they lose nothing, it is because they have nothing to lose: but you are sure of knowing beforehand, to their eternal shame be it spoken, the moment of their defeat; and without consulting the Stars, one may exactly

actly foretell the hour of the birth of their children.

The *French* seldom talk of their wives; for fear they shou'd speak before people that are better acquainted with them than themselves.

There is among them a set of very unhappy men, whom no body comforts; namely, the jealous husbands. There are some that every body hates, to wit, the jealous husbands; there are some that all men despise; the same jealous husbands.

And accordingly there is no Country in the World where there are so few of them, as among the *French*: their tranquility is not grounded upon any confidence that they place in their wives, but rather on the ill opinion they have of them: all the wise precautions of the *Asiatics*, their Veils, their Prisons, the vigilance of their Eunuchs, seem to them more likely to exercise the contrivance of this Sex, than to tire it. Here the Husbands bear their misfortunes with

with as good a Grace as they can, and look upon the Infidelity of their wives as strokes of Fate, which there is no avoiding. A Husband that shou'd pretend to be the sole possessor of his wife, wou'd be thought a disturber of the public Pleasure, and a kind of mad-man, that wou'd enjoy the light of the Sun all himself.

Here a husband that loves his wife, is looked upon as a man that has not merit enough to get the love of any other woman; that makes use of the authority of the Laws to supply his own want of agreeableness; that insists upon all his private Rights, to the prejudice of a whole Society; that takes a thing which was only pledged to him, to be his own property; and that does all that lies in his power to frustrate a tacit convention, which is the happiness of both Sexes. This Title of Husband to a Coquet which we are so cautious of owning in *Asia*, is
here

here borne without uneaſineſs: people find opportunities enow of taking their revenge. A Prince comforts himſelf for the loſs of one place, by the winning of another. While the *Turk* was taking *Bagdad* from us, were not we getting the Fortreſs of *Candahor* from the *Mogul*?

A man that in general bears with his wife's infidelity, is not found fault with; on the contrary, he is highly commended for his Prudence: there are only a few particular caſes that are ſcandalous.

Not that there are no virtuous Women in this Country; they are indeed very much diſtinguiſhed: my Conductor always ſhewed them me; but they were all ſo ugly, that a man muſt be a Saint, not to hate Virtue.

After what I have told thee of the Manners of this Country, thou wilt eaſily believe the *French* do not much value themſelves upon Conſtancy: they think it as ridiculous
for

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for a man to swear to a Woman that he will always love her, as to resolve he will always enjoy health or happiness. When they promise a woman that they will always love her, they suppose that she on her side will undertake to continue always amiable; and if she fails in her part, they think themselves no longer bound to theirs.

Paris, 7th of the Moon
Zilcade, 1714.

LETTER LIV.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

Gaming is very much practised in *Europe*: it is a very handsome employment, to be a Gamester: this single title supplies the want of birth, riches, or probity: it sets all the professors upon the foot of Gentlemen, without further examination: tho' every body knows how much

much they are deceived in judging after this manner: but they have agreed to be incorrigible.

The women especially are strangely addicted to it: it is true, they seldom follow it in their youth, but in order to indulge a more favourite passion: but as they grow old, their relish for gaming seems to get fresh youth: and this passion then fills the vacancies of all the rest.

They are all resolved to undo their husbands; and to effect it, they have various methods, adapted to every age, from the tenderest youth to the most decrepit old age: dress and equipage begin the ruin; gallantry helps it forwards; play compleats it.

I have often seen nine or ten women, or rather nine or ten Centuries, placed round a table: I have observed them in their hopes, their fears, their joys, and particularly in their transports of fury: thou wou'dst swear they cou'd never have time to appease themselves, and that
their

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their lives wou'd end, before their despair: thou wou'dst have been in some doubt whether those they paid their money to, were their Creditors or their Legatees.

Our holy Prophet seems to have had it chiefly in his view to restrain us from every thing that might disturb our Reason; he forbade us the use of Wine, which obscures it: he, by an exprefs precept, condemn'd all Games of Chance: and where it was impossible he shou'd remove the cause of our passions, he strove to deaden them. Love, among us, brings neither disturbance nor fury along with it: it is a languid passion, and lets our Soul remain in a perfect Calm: plurality of Wives delivers us from their dominion, and moderates the violence of our desires.

Paris, 18th of the Moon
Zilhage, 1714.

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LETTER LV.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

THE Libertines here maintain an infinite number of Women of Pleasure, and the Bigots as many Dervises: these Dervises take three Vows, of Obedience, Poverty, and Chastity. They say the first is best kept: as to the second, I will assure thee it is very little minded; and I leave thee to judge of the third.

But as rich as these Dervises are, they will never resign the notion of Poverty: sooner would our glorious Sultan renounce his sublime and magnificent Titles: they are much in the right on't; for this name of Poverty keeps them from the thing.

The Physicians, and some of these Dervises, whom they call Confessors, are always here either too much esteemed, or too much despised; tho'

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I am told the Heirs are better pleased with the Doctor than the Confessor.

I was t'other day in a Convent of these Dervises: one of them, a man venerable for his white Hair, accosted me very civilly; and having shewn me the whole House, led me into the Garden, where we fell into discourse. My good Father, said I, what is your office in the Community? Sir, replied he, with an air of much satisfaction at my question, I am Casuist. Casuist, cries I! all the time that I have been in *France*, I never heard a Word of that employment. How! don't you know what a Casuist is! hearken to me then; I will give you a notion of it that shall satisfy you to the full. There are two kinds of Sins; the Mortal, which absolutely exclude a man from Paradise; and the Venial, which indeed are offensive to God, but do not provoke so highly as to deprive us of Beatitude: now, our whole Art consists, in cleverly distinguishing be-

between these two sorts of Crimes; for, excepting just a few Free-thinkers, all the Christians wou'd willingly go to Paradise; but most of them wou'd gladly purchase it at as cheap a rate as they can. When a man knows what Sins are mortal he takes care to avoid all those, and his business is done: there are but few that aspire to a mighty high degree of perfection; and so not being ambitious, they don't much trouble themselves about the chief places: they just take care to squeeze into Paradise, and if they get but in, 'tis all they desire. These are men that gain Heaven by violence, and that say to God: O Lord, I have fulfilled the conditions most rigorously; you can't refuse to keep your promise; as I have done no more than just what you required of me, I don't expect you shou'd grant any thing more than you promised.

You find, Sir, we are a very necessary sort of folks. Yet this is

not all; you shall hear other-guess matters than those. It is not the Action that makes the Crime; it is the knowledge of the person that commits it: he that does Evil, and can believe it not to be so, may set his heart at ease: and as there are a vast many actions which are equivocal in their nature, a Casuist may give them a small degree of goodness which they have not, by reckoning them to be of that sort; and provided he can but make the man believe they have no Venom, it really takes all the Venom out of them.

I have here let you into the secret of a Trade which I am grown old in; I have shewed you the niceties of it: there is a turn to be given to any thing, tho' it seems ever so little capable of it. Father, says I, this is mighty well: but how do you make up the matter with Heaven? If the Grand *Sophi* had such a man as you in his Court, that shou'd serve him as you serve God, making

ing distinctions in his Commands, teaching his Subjects in what cases they must obey them, and how far they may violate them; he wou'd impale him, out of hand. With this I saluted my Dervise, and left him, without staying for an answer.

Paris, 23^d of the Moon
Maharrah, 1714.

LETTER LVI.

Rica to Rhedi, at Venice.

PARIS, my dear *Rhedi*, abounds with variety of Trades. There you shall have a man so obliging, as to come and offer you, for a small piece of Silver, the Art of making Gold.

Another promises you, that you shall lie with the Spirits of the Air, if you will live only thirty years without seeing a Woman.

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You may meet with Diviners so cunning, as to tell you your whole Life, provided they have but had one quarter of an hour's discourse with your Servants.

There are some dextrous Women that make Virginity a Flower which dies and revives every day; and is gathered the hundredth time with more pain than the first.

There are others, that by the power of their Art can repair all the injuries of Time, restore the fading beauty of a Complexion, and even call back a woman from the greatest Age to the most tender Youth.

All these people live, or endeavour to live, in a City which is the Mother of Invention.

The Revenues of the Citizens cannot possibly be farmed out; they consist in nothing but wit and industry: every one has his particular Talent, which he makes the best market of that he can.

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He that shou'd go about to number all the Men of the Law, that gape after the revenue of some Mosque, might as soon count the Sands of the Sea, or the Slaves of our Monarch.

Vast numbers of masters of Languages, Arts and Sciences, teach other people what they know nothing of themselves; and this Talent is very extraordinary: for it requires no great capacity to teach what one understands; but a man must have a fine genius indeed to instruct another in a thing he himself is wholly a stranger to.

It is impossible to die here any otherways than suddenly: Death has no way to exercise his dominion, but by surprize, in this Country: for in every corner you have people that have infallible Remedies for all Distempers that can be imagined.

All the Shops are spread with invisible Nets, in which the Chaps are all caught: however one sometimes

times gets out of them tolerably cheap : a spruce Girl shall wheedle a man for a whole hour together, to get him to buy a few Tooth-picks.

Every body departs from this City, with more caution about him than he came to it : by having squandred away part of your wealth to others, you learn to keep the rest : the only advantage which Strangers get in this Enchanting City.

Paris, 10th of the Moon
Saphar, 1714.

LETTER LVII.

Rica to Usbek, at * * *

I Was t'other day in a House where there was a Circle of People of all sorts : I found the whole Talk in the possession of two old Women, who had laboured in vain the whole morn-

morning to make themselves young again. Aye, aye, says one of them, the Men of these days are quite different from those we saw in our Youth. They were polite, well-bred, complaisant; but the rudeness of these is intolerable. Aye, every thing is changed for the worse, cried a man that seemed crippled with the Gout: times are not now what they were forty years ago: every body then was healthy; they walk'd about; they were gay; they loved nothing but laughing and dancing: now all the World is unsufferably dull and heavy. A moment afterwards, the conversation fell upon Politicks: Zownds, says an old Lord, the State can't be said now to be governed at all: shew me such a Minister now-a-days as Monsieur Colbert: I was thorowly acquainted with that Monsieur Colbert; he was my particular Friend; he always ordered my Pension to be paid me, before any body; what rare order the Finances were in then.

K Every

Every body was easie; but now, Blood, I am ruined. Sir, then spoke up an Ecclesiastic, you talk of the most miraculous days of our invincible Monarch: can any thing be more Glorious than what he did in those times to root out Heresy? And do you reckon the abolition of Duels for nothing, said another man that had not spoke a word yet, with great satisfaction? Mind that remark, whispers another in my ear: that man is charmed with that Edict, and observes it so religiously, that about six months ago he was caned for above half an hour, rather than infringe it.

It is my opinion, *Usbek*, that we never judge of things but with a private view to our selves. I am not surprized that the Negroes shou'd paint the Devil of the most glaring whiteness, and their Gods as black as a coal; that the *Venus* of some Nations shou'd have Breasts hanging down to her very Thighs; and lastly, that all Idolaters have
 repre-

represented their Gods with a human figure, and given them all their own inclinations. It has been said with good reason, that if the Triangles were to make a God they wou'd give him three Sides.

My dear *Usbek*, when I see men that crawl upon a poor Atom, the Earth, which is no more than a Point in the Universe, set themselves up directly for the Models of Providence, I know not how to reconcile so much Extravagance with so much Insignificancy.

Paris, 14th of the Moon
Saphar, 1714.

LETTER LVIII.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

THOU askest me if there are any Jews in *France*? Know, that wherever there is Money there are Jews. Thou enquirest what they

they do here? Just what they do in *Persia*: nothing can be more like a Jew of *Asia* than a Jew of *Europe*.

They testify among the Christians, as well as among us, an invincible obstinacy for their Religion, even to madness.

The Jewish Religion is an old Trunk which has produced two Branches that have covered the whole Earth, I mean, Christianity and Mahometism: or rather it is a Mother that has brought forth two Daughters who have stabb'd her with a thousand Wounds: for in point of Religion, the nearest Relations are the greatest Enemies. But as ill usage as she has received from them, she nevertheless values her self much upon having produced them: she makes use of them both to take in the whole World, while she with her venerable great Age takes in all Ages.

The Jews therefore look upon themselves to be the fountain of all
Holi-

Holiness, and the foundation of all Religion: on the contrary they take us to be Hereticks, that have altered the Law, or rather to be Rebellious Jews.

If the change had been made by slow degrees they think they might easily have been seduced: but as it was brought about at once and in a violent manner, as they know the day and hour of both their births; they despise us, because our Faith can be measured by Ages, and stick close to a Religion coeval with the World it self.

They never enjoy'd such a Calm in *Europe* as they now live in. The Christians begin to lay aside that intolerating Spirit, which used to govern them: the *Spaniards* have found what they lost by driving them out, and the *French* by vexing of Christians whose belief differed a little from that of the Prince. They are now convinced that the Zeal for the progress of a Religion, is very different from the Devotion
the

she requires; and that to love and observe her, there is no manner of necessity for hating and persecuting those who do not.

It were to be wished our Mussulmans wou'd reflect as seriously upon this point as the Christians, that we might in good earnest make peace between *Hali* and *Abubeker*, and leave God to decide which of those Holy Prophets is the greatest: I wou'd have them honoured by Acts of Veneration and Respect, and not by vain preferences; our business is to strive to deserve their favour, whatever place God may have assigned them: whether at his Right Hand, or beneath the Footstool of his Throne.

Paris, 18th of the Moon
Saphar, 1714.



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LETTER LIX.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

I Went t'other day into a famous Church, call'd *Notre Dame*: while I was admiring this noble Structure, I had an opportunity of discoursing with a Churchman, who was drawn thither by Curiosity as well as my self. Our conversation fell upon the ease and quiet of his profession. Most people, said he, envy the happiness of our condition; and they have some reason: yet it has its inconveniences: we are not so separated from the World, but that we are often call'd into it upon a thousand occasions, and there our part is very difficult to act.

The people of the world are strangely whimsical: they can bear neither our Approbation nor our Censures: if we offer to correct them, we are ridiculously impertinent.

continent: if we approve them, we act below our character: nothing is so great a mortification, as to think one has given scandal even to the Impious. We are therefore forced to observe an equivocal conduct, and to deal with the Libertines, not in a positive character, but by leaving them in an uncertainty how we relish their discourse: it requires a great deal of Wit to do this: this state of neutrality is very hard to keep: the men of the world who venture at every thing, who give way to all their flights, and according to their success drive them on or drop them, succeed much better.

This is not all; that happy quiet state, so much cried up, is not to be preserved when we come into the World. We no sooner appear, but they set us upon disputing: for instance, they oblige us to prove the use of Prayer, to a Man that does not believe in God; the necessity of Fasting, to another, that
has

has all his life denied the immortality of the Soul: the undertaking is laborious, and the Laugh seldom runs of our side. Nay more, a certain itch to draw others over to our Opinions, torments us incessantly, and is in a manner inseparable from our Profession. This, I own, is as ridiculous as it wou'd be for a *European* to labour for the honour of human Nature to wash the *Africans* white. We disturb the State, and plague our selves to propagate articles of Religion that are not fundamental; and we are something like the Conqueror of *China*, that drove his Subjects to a general Revolt, by endeavouring to force them to cut their hair, and pare their nails.

Even our Zeal to bring the people directly under our Care, to perform the Duties of our Holy Religion, is often dangerous, and cannot be managed with too much Caution. An Emperor, named *Theodosius*, put all the Inhabitants of a
cer-

certain Town to the Sword, even the Women and Children: afterwards offering to go into a Church, a Bishop called *Ambrosius* shut the gate upon him, as a sacrilegious Murderer; and in this he did a very Heroic Action. The Emperor having afterwards done the penance that such a Crime deserved, and being admitted again into the Church, went to seat himself among the Priests: the same Bishop turned him out, and in this played the part of a Fanatic and a Fool: so true it is, that we ought to be very distrustful of our Zeal. What matter'd it either to Religion or the State, whether that Prince had, or had nor been allowed a seat among the Priests?

Paris, 1st of the Moon
Rebiab 1, 1714.

LET-

LETTER LX.

Zelis to Usbek, at Paris.

THY Daughter having attained her seventh year, I thought it time to carry her into the inner apartments of the Seraglio, and not wait 'till she was ten years old, before I gave her into the keeping of the Black Eunuchs. We cannot too soon restrain a young creature from the liberties of Infancy, and give her a Holy Education within the Sacred Walls where Modesty has placed her residence.

For I cannot be of the mind of those Mothers, who never lock their Daughters up, till they are just ready to give them a Husband; that rather condemn them to the Seraglio, than consecrate them in it; making them by violence embrace a way of life, which they ought to have inspired them with

a love of by use. Are we to expect every thing from the power of Reason, and nothing from the silent persuasion of Habit ?

It is in vain to talk to us of the Subordination which Nature has placed us in: it is not enough to make us sensible of it, we shou'd be made to practise it, that it may support us in that critical time, when the Passions begin to grow, and stir us up to independance.

If we were tied to you only by our Duty, we might sometimes forget that ; if by our Inclination, a stronger might rise in us. But when the Laws give us to one Man, they forbid us all others, and put us as far out of their reach, as if we were a hundred thousand miles distance from them.

Nature, industrious in the favour of the Men, was not satisfy'd with giving Desires to them ; she implanted them in us too, that we might be animate instruments of their happiness : she set us in the
flame

flame of the passions, that they might live easie: if they ever come out of their insensibility, she has allotted us to bring them into it again, tho' we can never taste the happy state we place them in.

Yet, *Usbek*, do not imagine that thy condition is preferable to mine: I have felt a thousand pleasures here, which thou hast no notion of: my imagination has continually labour'd to shew me the value of them: I have lived, while thou hast only languished.

In the very prison where thou hast confined me, I am more free than thou: redouble thy cautions to have me watched, I shall yet enjoy thy Inquietudes: and thy suspicions, thy jealousy and thy uneasiness are so many proofs of thy dependence.

Go on, my dear *Usbek*; have me watched night and day: nay, do not confide in the ordinary precautions: encrease my happiness, by
secu-

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securing thy own ; and know I
fear nothing but thy indifference.

*From the Seraglio of Ispahan, the 2d
of the Moon Rebiab 1, 1714.*

LETTER LXI.

Rica to Usbek, at * * *

I Think thou intendest to spend
thy whole life in the Country.
I was to have lost thee but for two
or three days, and here is a fort-
night gone since I saw thee : 'tis
true, thou art in a charming House ;
thou hast Company suited to thy
temper ; thou reasonest at ease :
there needs no more to make thee
forget the whole Universe.

For my part, I lead much the
same life that I did when thou wast
here : I launch forth into the
World, and endeavour to know
it : my Mind loses by degrees all
that was left in it of the *Asiatic*,
and

and bends easily to the *European* Manners. It does not appear so strange to me now, to see five or six women in the same House with as many Men ; and I begin to think it is no such ill mixture.

I may say, I knew nothing at all of Woman 'till I came hither : I have seen more of their nature here in a month, than I shou'd have done in thirty years in a Seraglio.

Among us, all people's Characters are uniform, being all forced : we do not see them as they are, but as they are obliged to be : in that Slavery both of the Heart and Mind, we hear nothing speak but Fear, which has but one language ; and not Nature, which expresses herself so many different ways, and appears under so many various shapes.

Diffimulation, an Art so necessary, and so much practised among us, is here unknown : every thing is spoke out, heard, seen : the
Heart

Heart appears as much to view as the Face : in their Manners, in Virtue, nay in Vice it self, there is something open and undisguised.

To please the women requires a certain talent different from that which pleases them most : it consists in a kind of Trifling or Toying in the mind, that amuses them very agreeably, in that it seems to promise them every moment, what cannot be perform'd but in too long intervals.

This Trifling, naturally made for the Toilets, seems to have formed the general character of the whole Nation : they trifle at Council ; they trifle at the head of their Armies ; they trifle with Ambassadors : no profession seems ridiculous, but in proportion to the Gravity it takes upon it : a Physician wou'd not be half so much laughed at, if his Habit were less doleful, and if he did but kill his Patients after a Trifling Toying Method.

Paris, 10th of the Moon
Rebiab 1, 1714.

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LETTER LXII.

*The Chief of the Black Eunuchs
to Usbek, at Paris.*

I Am in a perplexity not to be described, most Magnificent Lord: the Seraglio is in the most terrible disorder and confusion that can be imagined: War reigns among thy Wives: thy Eunuchs are divided: nothing is to be heard but Complaints, Murmurs and Reproaches: my Remonstrances are despised: every thing seems lawful in this time of anarchy, and I have now nothing but an empty Title in the Seraglio. There is not one of thy Wives but what thinks her self above all the rest by her Birth, her Beauty, her Wealth, her Wit, or thy Love; and upon one of those Titles claims all the respect: I at length begin to lose that unwearyed patience, with which yet I have not been able to please them: my pru-

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dence, nay my Complaisance, a virtue so rare and uncommon in the Post I hold, have been useless.

Shall I lay before thee, Magnificent Lord, the occasion of all these Disorders? It is all in thy own heart, and in thy tenderness towards them. If this did not withhold my hand: if instead of Remonstrances thou gavest me the power of Chastisement: if instead of being soften'd with their Complaints and Tears, thou wou'dst but send them to weep before me who am never softened, I shou'd quickly fashion them to the Yoke they are to bear, and soon break their proud independant humours.

Being taken away at fifteen years of age from the most remote parts of *Africa*, my Country, I was first sold to a Master who had above twenty Wives or Concubines. Judging, by my gravity and taciturnity, that I was fit for the Seraglio, he commanded that I shou'd be made compleatly so; and I underwent an
ope-

operation painful at first, but happy for me in the end, as it brought me to the ear and confidence of my Masters. I was introduced into the Seraglio, which was quite a new world to me: the Chief Eunuch, who was the severest in my life I ever saw, governed with an absolute sway. Not a word was ever heard of Strifes and Quarrels: a profound Silence reigned throughout: all those women went to bed, and rose, exactly at a certain hour all the Year round: they entered the Baths one after another, and came out at the least Signal that we gave them: at all other times they were generally shut up in their Chambers. He had one Rule, which was to keep them wonderfully neat, and it is impossible to express his nicety and care in this particular: the least refusal of obedience was punished without Mercy. 'Tis true, he wou'd say, I am a Slave, but 'tis to a Man who is Your Master as well as

L 2

Mine:

Mine: I only make use of the Power he has given me over you: it is he that punishes You, and not I: I only lend my hand. Those Women never enter'd my Master's Apartment without they were called: they received that Favour with joy, and were excluded from it without Murmuring: in short, I who was the meanest of the Blacks in that peaceful Seraglio, was a thousand times more respected than I am in Thine, where I bear the chief Command.

As soon as ever this great Eunuch found out my Genius, he had his eye upon me; he gave my Master a character of me; as a man capable of pursuing his Schemes, and succeeding him in the Post he enjoyed: he did not mind my great Youth; he thought my earnest attention to his example wou'd serve me instead of Experience. To make short, I grew so fast into his confidence, that he made no scruple to intrust me with the Keys of those
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tremendous Places which he had so long guarded. 'Twas under this great Master that I learnt the difficult Art of Ruling, and formed my self to the Maxims of an inflexible Government: I studied the Hearts of Women under his tuition: he taught me to make advantage of their Weaknesses, and not to be shaken by their Airs of haughtiness. He often took delight in seeing me exercise them, and drive them to the utmost verge of obedience; he then brought them back again by degrees, and made me seem to give way my self. But it was worth while to see him in those moments, when they were driven to the very point of Despair, between Prayers and Reproaches; he bore their Tears without the least Concern. This, he wou'd say with an air of Satisfaction, is the true way of governing Women: their number never gives me the least perplexity: I cou'd manage all those of our Mighty Monarch with the

same case. How can a Man hope to captivate their Hearts, if his faithful Eunuchs have not first subdued their Minds?

He had not only a firm Resolution, but also a great deal of penetration: he read their very Thoughts and saw thro' all their Diffimulations: their studied Looks and fictitious Countenances never imposed upon him: he knew all their most private Actions, and their most secret Words: he made use of some to betray others, and took pleasure in rewarding the least discovery. As they never presumed to come near their Husband, but when they were summon'd; the Eunuch call'd just which he pleased, and directed his Master's choice according to his own views; and the preference was always the reward of some Secret reveal'd: he had convinced his Master that it was necessary to good Order that he shou'd have this privilege to add weight to his authority. This was
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the method of Government, magnificent Lord, in a Seraglio which I believe was the best regulated of any in *Persia*.

Unty my hands: allow me to make my self obeyed. One week shall restore Order out of all this Confusion: it is no more than what thy Glory requires, and thy Security demands.

From thy Seraglio of Ispahan, the 9th of the Moon Rebiab 1, 1714.

LETTER LXIII.

Usbek, to his *Wives at the Seraglio at Ispahan.*

I Hear that the Seraglio is all in confusion, and that it is filled with civil Broils and Divisions. What did I recommend to you at my departure but Peace and good Understanding? You promised me

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obedience ; was it with intent to deceive me ?

It is you that wou'd be deceived, if I were minded to follow the advice of the Chief Eunuch, or if I wou'd use my Authority to compel you to live according to my Exhortations.

I know not how to use those violent methods till I have tried all others : do therefore for your own sakes, what you wou'd not do for mine.

The Chief Eunuch has great reason to complain : he says you have no manner of regard to him. How can you reconcile this behaviour with the modesty of your condition ? Has not He the care of your Virtue, in my absence ? Is he not the depositary of that sacred Treasure ? But the contempt you shew him is a certain proof that those who are employ'd to keep you within the bounds of Honour, are troublesome and distasteful to you.

Alter

Alter your Conduct, I desire you; that I may another time reject the proposals made to me, contrary to your Liberty and Ease.

For I wou'd willingly make you forget that I am your Master, and remember me only as your Husband.

Paris, the 5th of the Moon
Chahban, 1714.

LETTER LXIV.

Rica to * * *

MEN here apply themselves very close to the Sciences; but I know not whether they are very Learned. He that doubts every thing as a Philosopher, dares deny nothing as a Theologist: this contradictory Man is always well satisfy'd with himself, provided you agree about qualities.

The

The predominant passion or rather fury of most of the *French* is, to be thought Wits; and the predominant passion of those who would be thought Wits, is to write Books.

And yet there is nothing so ill contrived: Nature seems wisely to have provided that the follies of men shou'd pass away, but Books perpetuate them. A Fool ought to be satisfy'd with having teaz'd those who liv'd at the same time with him: but he is for going further, and is resolv'd to plague the Ages to come: he is resolv'd to make his Impertinence triumph over Oblivion, which he might have enjoy'd as well as his Grave: he will have Posterity know that such a one liv'd, and all future generations be inform'd that he was a Fool.

Of all Authors, there is none I despise more than the Compilers, who forage far and wide for scraps of other Men's Works, which they piece into their own, like so many dabs of green turf in a flow-

er-garden: they are not a whit ſuperior to thoſe that work in a Printing-houſe, who diſtribute the Characters, which being put together make a Book, towards which they furniſh'd nothing but manual labour. I am for having Original Authors reverenc'd: and, in my judgment, 'tis a ſort of prophanation to drag as it were out of their Sanctuary pieces of their Works, and expoſe them to a contempt which they deſerve not.

If a man has nothing new to ſay, why don't he hold his tongue? what have we to do with theſe double imployments, that is, reading the ſame thing twice? but I will give a new order. You are an ingenious Man: that is to ſay, you come into my library and put undermoſt the Books that were a-top, and uppermoſt thoſe that were at the bottom: Your performance is a Maſter-piece.

I write to thee upon this Subject, becauſe I am out of all patience.

tience with a Book I have just put away, which is so Voluminous that it seems to contain the whole circle of Sciences; but has split my Brain, without teaching me any thing. Adieu.

Paris, the 17th of the Moon
Chahban, 1714.

LETTER LXV.

Ibben to Usbek, at Paris.

THree Ships are arriv'd here without bringing me any manner of news of thee. Art thou sick, or dost thou take delight in making me uneasy?

If thou lovest me not in a Country where thou hast no tyes, what wouldst thou do in the middle of *Persia*, and in the bosom of thy Family! But perhaps I deceive myself: thou art too amiable not to find
Friends

Friends where-ever thou goest: the heart is an Alien no where: it is free of all Cities: how can a well-dispos'd mind avoid forming engagements? I confess to thee, I reverence Friendships that are of an ancient standing; but I am not displeas'd with contracting new ones in all places.

Whatever Country I happen to be in, I have liv'd as if I had been to end my days there: I have had the same fondness for virtuous people; the same compassion, or rather tenderness, for the unfortunate; the same esteem for those whom Prosperity has not spoil'd. This is my humour, *Usbek*; where-ever I meet Men, I shall find Friends.

There is here a certain Guebre, who, I think, next to thee, possesses the first place in my heart: he is Probity it self: some private reasons have oblig'd him to retire to this City, where he lives an easy life upon the gains of an honest Traffick, together with his
Wife

Wife whom he loves. The whole course of his Life is remarkable for generous actions: and tho' he seeks to be obscure, there is more of Heroism in his Soul, than in that of the greatest Monarchs.

I have often talk'd to him concerning thee; I shew'd him all thy Letters: I observe he is pleas'd with them; and I already perceive thou hast a Friend that is unknown to thee.

Underneath thou wilt find his principal Adventures: tho' he was loth to write them, he could not refuse them to my Friendship, and I commit them to thine.

HISTORY of APHERIDON: *and* ASTARTE.

I Was born among the *Guebres*, of a Religion which is perhaps the oldest in the World. I was so unhappy to be smitten with Love, before I was endu'd with Reason.

I

I was hardly six years old when I could not live without my Sister: my eyes were always fix'd on her; and if she left me but a moment, she was sure to find them drown'd in tears when she came back: each hour added no less to the increase of my Love than to my Age. My Father, surpriz'd at so strong a Sympathy, would gladly have marry'd us, according to the ancient custom of the *Guebres*, introduc'd by *Cambyfes*: but the fear of the *Mahometans*, under whose Yoke we live, hinders those of our Nation from thinking of these holy alliances, which our Religion not only permits but commands; and which are such natural images of the Union already form'd by nature.

My Father thus finding it wou'd be of dangerous consequence to follow my inclination and his own, resolv'd to extinguish a flame which he thought but just beginning, but which was already at its utmost period:

period : he feign'd a Voyage, and took me along with him ; leaving my Sister in the hands of one of his female Relations ; for my mother had been dead two years. I will not now tell thee the distraction I was in upon this parting : I embrac'd my Sister, who was drown'd in tears : but I shed none ; for Grief had made me as it were insensible. We arriv'd at *Teffis* ; and my Father, after he had committed my Education to one of our Relations, left me there and return'd home.

Some time afterwards I understood, that, by the Interest of a Friend of his, he had got my Sister into the King's *Beiram*, to wait upon a Sultana : had I heard the News of her death, I could not have been more struck : for besides my despair of ever seeing her again ; her entrance into the *Beiram* had render'd her a *Mahometan* ; and she could no longer look upon me without horreur, according
to

to the prejudice of that Religion. Mean while not being able to live longer at *Tefflis*, weary of life and hateful to my self, I return'd to *Ispahan*. My first words were bitter to my Father: I upbraided him with putting his Daughter into a place where none can enter without changing their Religion. You have brought down upon your Family, says I to him, the Wrath of God, and of the Sun that illuminates you: you have done worse than if you had stain'd the Elements; for you have stain'd your Daughter's Soul, which is no less pure: I shall dye of grief and love: but may my death be your only punishment! Upon these words I went forth; and for two years I pass'd my life in looking on the Walls of the *Beiram*, and considering the place where my Sister might be; exposing my self every minute to be murder'd by the Eunuchs who keep guard about those awful places.

At

At length my Father dy'd ; and the Sultana whom my Sister served, seeing her every day encrease in beauty, became jealous of her, and married her to an Eunuch, who was passionately desirous of her ; by this means my Sister got quit of the Seraglio ; and with her Eunuch took a house at *Ispahan*.

It was upwards of three months, before I could get to speak to her : the Eunuch, the most jealous of mortals, finding some excuse or other to put me off from day to day. At length I was admitted into his *Beiram*, and he caused me to speak to her thorough a grated Window : the eyes of a Linx cou'd not have discovered her thro' so many habits and veils as she had on ; and I knew her again by nothing but the sound of her Voice. What was my Emotion, when I saw myself at once so near her, and so far off : I put a restraint upon my self, for I was watch'd. As for her, I thought she dropt some tears. Her
Hus-

Husband went about to make some pitiful Excuses, but I treated him as the vilest of Slaves. He knew not what to do, when he saw I spoke to my Sister in a Language which was unknown to him; it was the ancient *Persian*, which is our sacred Language. How, Sister, says I to her, is it then true that you have quitted the Religion of your Forefathers? I know that when you enter'd into the *Beiram* you could not but make profession of *Mahometism*: but tell me, cou'd your heart consent like your mouth, to forsake a Religion which permits me to love you? And for whom, pray, do you quit that Religion, which ought to be so dear to us? for a Wretch still mark'd with the Chains he us'd to wear; who, were he a Man, would be the last of Men? Brother, said she, the Man you speak of is my Husband: I must honour him, as worthless as he appears to you; and I shall be the last of Women, if ——— Ah!

Sister,

Sister, says I to her, you are a *Guebres* : he neither is nor can be your Husband : were you a true Believer, like your Forefathers, you wou'd look upon him as a Monster. Alas, said she, at how great a distance does that Religion discover it self to me ! I scarce knew the Precepts of it, when I was oblig'd to forget them. You see, the Language I speak to you in is no longer familiar to me, and that I have all the difficulty in the world to express my self : but be assur'd the remembrance of our Childhood still pleases me ; that ever since I have had nothing but counterfeit Joys ; that no day has past but I have thought on you ; that you had a greater hand in my marriage than you think for ; and that the only thing that determin'd me to it was the hope of seeing you again : but I tremble to think how much further pain that day will give me, which has already given me so much ! I see you are quite beside
your

your self ; my Husband foams with Rage and Jealousy ; I shall never see you again ; doubtless, I speak to you for the last time of my life : in which case, Brother, it would be of no long continuance. Here she melted into tears ; and finding it impossible to proceed, she left me, the most afflicted Man that ever was.

Three or four days after, I ask'd to see my Sister : the barbarous Eunuch would have hinder'd me : but besides that these sort of Husbands have not the same Authority over their Wives as others have ; he was so distractedly fond of my Sister, that he could refuse her nothing. I saw her again in the same place, and the same Equipage, accompany'd by two Slaves ; which made me have recourse to our peculiar Language. Sister, said I to her, how comes it that I can't see you, without finding my self in such a situation ? these Walls that inclose you, these Bolts and Bars and Iron

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Grates, these horrible Guardians that watch you, make me almost mad : how have you lost the sweet Liberty that your Ancestors enjoy'd ? Your Mother, who was so chaste, gave her Husband no other surety for her Virtue, than that Virtue it self : they both liv'd happy in a mutual Confidence of each other : and the simplicity of their ways was to them a treasure a thousand times more precious than this false splendor which you seem to enjoy in this sumptuous house. In losing your Religion, you have lost your Liberty, your Happiness, and that precious Equality, which is the honour of your Sex. But what is still worse ; you are no Woman, for you cannot be so ; but the Slave of a Slave, who has been degraded from Humanity. Brother, said she, speak with respect of my Husband, and the Religion I have embrac'd : according to which Religion it is a Crime in me to hear you speak, much more to speak to you. How, Sister,

Sister, said I to her passionately, do you think this Religion to be a true one! Ah! said she, sighing, how well wou'd it be for me were it not! I make too great a Sacrifice to it, not to believe it to be true; and if my Scruples——

Here she was silent. Yes, Sister, your Scruples, whatever they be, are well grounded. What can you expect from a Religion, which makes you miserable in this World, and leaves you no hope in the other? Consider, ours is the ancientest in the whole world; it has always flourish'd in *Persia*; it took beginning with that Empire, whose Origin is beyond knowledge: it was Chance alone that introduc'd *Mahometism*: that Sect was establish'd not by the means of persuasion, but by the Sword: Were but our natural Princes enabled, you would again see the Worship of the ancient *Magi* predominate. Look back to those remote Ages, and you will find it all Magism; nothing

nothing of the *Mahometan* Sect; which thousands of Years afterwards was not so much as dreamt of. But, said she, tho' my Religion were of a more modern date than yours, it is at least of a purer kind, since we worship God alone; whereas you likewise worship the Sun, the Stars, Fire, and even the Elements. I find, Sister, the *Mus-sulmans* have taught you to asperse our Holy Religion; we neither worship the Stars nor the Elements; neither did our Forefathers ever worship them; nor did they ever erect Temples to them, or offer Sacrifices to them; they only paid them a sort of Religious Reverence, due to the Works of the Creator, and the Manifestations of the Deity. But, Sister, I beseech you, in the Name of God, who enlightens us, accept of this sacred Book; 'tis the Book of our Legislator *Zoro-aster*: read it without prejudice: admit into your Heart the Rays of Light which will shine upon you
in

in the reading of it: call to mind your Forefathers, who so long honoured the Sun in the Holy City of *Balk*: Lastly, bear me in mind, me who expect neither Repose, Happiness, nor Life, but from your Change. Here, in the utmost disorder, I quitted her; and left her by her self, to decide the most important Affair I could have in life.

I return'd again two days afterwards; I spoke not one word to her; I silently waited the Sentence either of Life or Death. You are belov'd, Brother, says she, and by a *Guebre*: I have had a terrible conflict! but Gods! what difficulties does Love remove! how easy am I now! how reliev'd! I now fear nothing but to love you too much; I can put no bounds to my love; but it is a lawful excess. Ah, how well does this suit the Situation of my heart! But you who have found a way to break the Chains which my mind had forg'd

to it self; when will you break those that tye up my hands? From this moment I am yours; let me see by your readiness in accepting me, how much you value the Present I make you. Brother, I believe I shall die in your arms the first moment I have you in mine. It were impossible fully to express the Joy I felt at these kind words: I did believe, and actually saw my self in an instant the happiest of all men: I saw upon the verge of accomplishment, all the Wishes I had been forming for five and twenty years; I saw vanishing away all the Uneasinesses which had render'd life so painful to me: but after I had a little dwelt upon these pleasing Ideas, I found I was not so near my happiness as I at first fancy'd; even tho' I had surmounted the greatest Obstacle of all. The vigilance of her Keepers was to be surpriz'd; I durst not trust any body with the Secret of my Life. She and I were to do the whole work: If I mis-

carry'd,

carry'd, I ran the hazard of being impaled; but I thought impaling a trifle to miscarrying. We agreed that she should send to me for a Clock her Father had left her, into which I was to convey a File to cut the bars of the Window that look'd into the Street, as likewise a rope-Ladder; after which I was to forbear visiting her, but should go every night under her window, to wait till she could put her design in execution. Fifteen whole nights I spent without seeing any Soul, because no favourable opportunity had offer'd it self. The sixteenth I heard a Saw at work: now and then the sound ceas'd, and in those intervals my fears were inexpressible. At last I saw her fasten the Rope; by which she slid down into my Arms: I was so transported, that I thought not of danger; I remain'd a considerable time without stirring from the place: I led her out of the City, where I had a Horse ready for her:

I plac'd her behind me, and made my best of my way out of a place that might have been so fatal to us. We arriv'd before day at a house of a *Guebre*, in a desert place, where he liv'd by himself in a frugal manner by the labour of his hands; we did not think fit to tarry here, and by his advice we enter'd into a thick Forest, where we took up our Quarters in the hollow of an old Oak Tree, till such time as the noise of our escape was at an end. We liv'd unseen in this by place, incessantly repeating our Vows of Love to each other: till we cou'd find an opportunity to be married by some *Guebre* Priest, according to the Ceremonies prescribed by our holy Books. Sister, said I to her, how holy is this Union of ours; Nature has join'd our Souls; and our holy Law will soon do as much by our Hands. At length came a Priest to put an end to our amorous impatience: he perform'd, in the house of a Peasant, all the Ceremonies

remonies of Marriage: he gave us his Benediction, and a thousand times wisht us the same Vigour as *Gustaspes*, and the Holiness of *Ho-booraspes*. We soon afterwards left *Persia* for our own security, and retired into *Georgia*. There we liv'd a Year, every day more and more delighted with each other. But, my Purse beginning to fail me, and being more apprehensive of want for my Sister's sake, than my own; I quitted her, to go and look out for some relief of our Relations. Never was so tender a Parting: but my Journey was not only fruitless but fatal: for finding on the one hand our whole Estate confiscated; and on the other my Relations in a manner unable to relieve me: I obtain'd no more money than to defray the Charges of my return. But how shall I describe the affliction I was in, not to find my Sister! Some days before my arrival, the *Tartars* had made an Incurſion into the Town where

she was, and finding her beautiful, carry'd her off, and sold her to some Jews that were going into *Turkey*; they left behind them only one little Girl, whom she had brought me some months before. I follow'd those Jews, and overtook them three leagues from the Place: my Prayers, my Tears were ineffectual: they ask'd me thirty Tomans for her Ransom, and resolv'd not to abate the least of their demand. After I had apply'd my self to every body, and implor'd the Protection both of Turkish and Christian Priests; I address'd my self to an *Armenian* Merchant, to whom I sold my Daughter and my self for five and thirty Tomans: I went to the Jews, and gave them thirty Tomans, and the other five I carry'd to my Sister, whom I had not yet seen. You are now at liberty, Sister, says I to her, and I may embrace you; see here I have brought you five Tomans: I am sorry the purchase of me could fetch no more money. How! have you sold your self?
Yes,

Yes, says I to her. Unhappy man, what hast thou done! was I not miserable enough before, but you must still labour to make me more so? Your Liberty was my Consolation, and your Slavery will now bring me to the Grave. Ah Brother, how cruel is your Love! But where is my Daughter, that I see her not? I have sold her too, says I. We both dissolv'd into Tears, and had not power to speak. After this I went to wait upon my Master, and my Sister was there almost as soon as I. She fell on her Knees. I come to ask of you Slavery, as others do Liberty: take me, I shall fetch you more money than my Husband did. Upon which follow'd such a conflict as forc'd Tears even from my Master. Alas, poor Man, said she, didst thou think I cou'd accept of my Liberty at the Expence of thine? Sir, behold here two Wretches that must dye, if you part us: I am your Slave, I make my self over to you as your

M 4

Property;

Property ; pay me ; perhaps the Money, together with my Services, may one day obtain from you what I dare not presume to ask of you ; it is your Interest not to part us, and depend upon it, that his life is at my disposal. The *Armenian* was a good-natur'd man, and was mov'd at our Misfortunes : Serve me both of you with fidelity and zeal, and in a year you shall have your Liberty : I see you both deserve a better fate : if when you are free, you are as happy as you deserve to be ; if Fortune should smile on you, I am certain you will make me amends for the loss I shall sustain. We both embraced his Knees, and follow'd him in his Voyage. We assisted each other in the labours of Servitude, and I was always overjoy'd to perform the Tasks that were allotted to my Sister.

At length the Year was up : our Master was as good as his word, and set us at Liberty. We returned to *Tefflis*, where I found an old friend

friend of my Father's, who practised Physick in that place. He lent me some money, which I laid out in Merchandise, and fell into a way of Trade. Some affairs afterwards called me hither to *Smirna*, where I settled, and have lived six years, enjoying the most agreeable and charming Society in the World: Love and Union reign in my family, and I wou'd not change my condition to be the greatest King in the Universe. I was so happy as to meet once more with that *Armenian* Merchant to whom I owe my all, and have done him very signal services.

*Smirna, 27th of the Moon
Gemmadi 1, 1714.*



LEPT

LETTER LXVI.

Rica to Usbek.

I Went t'other day to dine with a man of the long Robe, who had often invited me. After we had talk'd over a great many things, says I to him; Your trade seems to me to be a very slavish one, Sir. Not so slavish as you think for, answered he: as we manage it, it is only an amusement. How do you mean? Is not your head always fill'd with other men's Business? are you not continually taken up with things that don't in the least concern ye? Things that cause no concern in us, you mean, cry'd he: and this is the reason why it is not so fatiguing a Trade as you thought it was. Finding him take the thing in so easy a manner, I proceeded: Sir, says I to him, I have not yet seen your Study: I don't know how you shou'd, says he, for I have never a one.

one. To raise money to buy this Office, I sold my Library; and the Bookseller, who had it, left me nothing but my Book of Accompts: nor am I at all sorry I parted with the others: we Judges puff not ourselves up with vain Knowledge: what have we to do with so many volumes of the Law? almost all Cases are Hypothetical, and out of the general Rule. But Sir, says I to him, is not that occasion'd by your turning them out of the general Rule? for in short, why are there such things as Laws in any Nation, if they are not apply'd? and how can they be apply'd, if they are not known? were you but acquainted with the Courts of Judicature, replies the Magistrate, you wou'd not talk as you do: We have our living Books, the Counsellors: they work for us, and take upon themselves to instruct us. And don't they likewise take upon themselves to deceive you too, reply'd I? you wou'd do well to guard

guard against their Ambuscades ;
 they have arms with which they
 attack your Equity, and it is fit
 you shou'd have some to defend it :
 you ought not to go into the thick
 of a Battle open-breasted, among
 men that are arm'd up to the
 Chin.

*Paris, 1st of the Moon,
 Chahban, 1714.*

LETTER LXVII.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

COu'dst thou ever have imagi-
 ned, I shou'd grow a greater
 Metaphysician than I used to be ?
 yet so it has happened ; and thou
 wilt be convinced of it, when thou
 hast undergone this inundation of
 my Philosophy.

The wisest Philosophers that have
 meditated upon the nature of God,
 have concluded him to be a Being
 infinitely

infinitely perfect; but they have abused this Notion of him most wretchedly; they have mustered up all the various perfections that man is capable of possessing or imagining, and loaded the Idea of the Deity with them all: without considering that those Ideas are often contrary, and cannot subsist in the same person, without destroying one another.

The Poets of the West say, that an ancient Painter intending to draw the Goddess of Beauty, got together all the finest Grecian Women, and took from each her particular charm, of which he composed a Picture that resembled the most lovely of all the Goddesses. If a man from hence shou'd conclude that she must therefore be Fair and Brown, her Eyes Grey and Black, and that she was both Tender and Haughty; he wou'd be thought very ridiculous.

God

God may want a perfection, that wou'd cause in him a greater imperfection : but he is never limited by any but himself ; he is his own Necessity : thus tho' God is All-powerful, yet he cannot violate his promises, nor deceive Mankind. Very often too this Inability does not lie in him, but in relative things, and that is the reason he cannot change their Essences.

So that there is no need to wonder some of our Doctors shou'd have presumed to deny the infinite Prescience of God, upon this foundation, that it was incompatible with his Justice.

As daring as this Notion may seem, Metaphysics favour it wonderfully. According to the principles of that, it is impossible for God to foresee such things as depend upon the determination of free Agents ; because that which never happened, does not exist, and consequently cannot be known : for Nothing, having no properties, cannot

not be perceiv'd : God cannot read in a Will which is not in being, nor ſee in the Soul a thing which does not exiſt in her : For till ſhe has taken her determination, the Action which ſhe is determined upon is not in her.

The Soul is the Author of her own determination : but there are ſome occaſions in which ſhe is ſo irrefolute that ſhe knows not which way to determine. Sometimes ſhe does it, merely to make uſe of her liberty ; ſo that God cannot ſee this Determination beforehand, neither in the Action of the Soul, nor in the Actions of the Objects upon her.

How ſhould God foreſee things that depend upon the determination of free Agents ? He cou'd foreſee them but two ways : by conjecture ; which in the very terms is a contradiction to infinite Preſcience : or elſe he muſt foreſee them as neceſſary effects infallibly attending a certain cauſe which
muſt

must infallibly produce them, which is yet more contradictory: for the Soul must be free by the very supposition; and yet in the fact she wou'd be no more so, than one Billiard Ball is free to lie still when struck by another.

Yet do not imagine I wou'd set bounds to the knowledge of God. As he makes his Creatures act just according to his own Will, he knows every thing that he thinks fit to know, but tho' it is in his power to see every thing, yet he does not always make use of that Power: he generally leaves the Creature at liberty to act or not to act, that it may have room to be Guilty or Innocent. It is in this view that he renounces his right of acting upon her and directing her resolution: but when he is minded to know any thing, he always does know it; because he need only will that it shall happen as he sees it, and direct the resolution of his Creature according to his Will. Thus he settles

settles the things which shall happen among those which are possible, by fixing by his decrees the future determinations of the minds of his Creatures, and depriving them of the power he hath bestowed upon them of acting or not acting.

If we may presume to make use of a comparison in a thing which is above all Comparisons; a Monarch does not know what his Ambassador will do in an affair of Importance: if he thinks fit to know it, he need only give him directions to behave so or so; and he may be assured the thing will happen according to his direction.

The Alcoran and the Books of the *Jews* constantly rise up against the Doctrine of Absolute Prescience: in them, God every where seems ignorant of the future determinations of the Mind of Man; and this seems to be the first truth that *Moses* taught to the World.

God places *Adam* in the Terrestrial Paradise, upon this condition that he shall not eat of a certain fruit;

fruit; an absurd precept from a Being that knew the future determinations of the Soul: for in short, cou'd such a Being promise his Favours upon conditions, without indeed bantering the creature to whom the Promise is made? 'Tis just as if a man that was sure of the taking of *Bagdad*, shou'd tell another; I will give you a thousand Crowns if *Bagdad* is not taken; wou'd it not be a poor scurvy Jest?

Paris, the last of the Moon
Chahban, 1714.

LETTER LXVIII.

Zelis to Usbek, at Paris.

SOLIMAN whom thou lovest is drove perfectly to despair, by an Affront which has been lately put upon him. A young desperate Blockhead named *Suphis*, for three years together sought his Daughter in marriage: he seemed pleased with
her

her Person, by the account and description he had of it from women that had seen her in her infancy; the Portion was agreed upon, and every thing went on without obstruction. Yesterday, after the first Ceremonies, the young maid issued forth on horseback, attended by her Eunuch, and covered from head to foot, according to custom: but when she came to her intended Husband's house, he shut the door upon her, and swore he wou'd not take her, without they enlarged her Fortune. The Relations flock'd in to make up the matter; and after much persuasion, prevailed upon *Soliman* to make his Son-in-law a small Present. At length the Ceremonies being all compleated, they brought the young Woman to the Bed, not without great struggling: but an hour afterwards, the Madman got up in a violent Fury, cut her over the face in several places, swearing she was no Maid, and sent her back to her Father. It is impossible

possible to be more confounded than he is with this Injury: many affirm the poor Girl is innocent. Fathers are very unhappy in being liable to such Affronts: if my Child shou'd meet with such treatment, I believe I shou'd die with Grief.

*From the Seraglio at Fatme,
the 9th of the Moon Gem-
madi 1, 1714.*

LETTER LXIX.

Usbek to Zelis.

I Pity *Soliman*, and so much the more, as his misfortune is without remedy, and his Son-in-law has only made use of the privilege allow'd him by the Law. I own I think the Law very severe in thus exposing the honour of a Family to the caprice of a Madman: 'tis a jest to say there are certain rules to come at a knowledge of the Truth; that

that is an old error which we are now cured of, and our Physicians give unanswerable reasons for the uncertainty of those proofs. The very Christians look upon them to be Chimerical, tho' they are plainly established in their sacred Books, and their ancient Legislator made the Innocence or Condemnation of all Women to depend upon it.

I hear with pleasure the care thou takest of the education of thine: God grant that her Husband may find her as pure and as beautiful as *Fatima*: that she may have ten Eunuchs to watch her: that she may be the honour and ornament of the Seraglio, for which she is decreed: that she may always have gilded Ceilings over her head, and rich Tapestry under her Feet: and to compleat my wishes, may my Eyes behold her in all her Glory!

Paris, the 5th of the Moon
Chalval, 1714.

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LETTER LXX.

*Rica to Usbek, at * * **

I Was t'other day in Company, where there was a Man hugely pleased with himself. In a quarter of an hour he had decided three Questions in Morality; four Problems in History; and five Points in natural Philosophy: I never came near so universal a Decider: his mind was never suspended by the least Doubt. We left the Sciences; we talk'd of the News of the Times; he decided the News of the Times. I had a mind to catch him, and I said to my self I will get into my strongest Intrenchment; I will take Shelter in my own Country. I talk'd about *Persia*: but I had scarce spoke four words but he contradicted me twice, upon the authority of *Tavernier* and *Chardin*. Good God, quoth I to my self, what a strange Fellow is this?

this? He will be better acquainted with the Streets of *Ispahan* than I am, presently! However I soon came to my resolution: I held my peace, I let him alone, and he decides on to this day.

Paris, the 8th of the Moon
Zilcade, 1715.



The End of the First Volume.

...to this day.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

